

Mainstream

SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1968

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NOT BY CODES ALONE

VOLUNTARY self-regulation of the Press in the public interest remains a dream. Neither the organisations of newspaper owners nor those of working journalists in the country are today in a position to discipline their members even in matters vitally affecting national unity and internal peace in the country.

It is true that in some matters, like communal propaganda and mischief, a large number of newspapers have conducted themselves with a sense of responsibility and have consciously tried not to publish material which may have the effect of exacerbating feelings of mutual suspicion and hatred. But it is equally true that a number of newspapers have made it their mission to spread hatred and instigate violence against certain communities or against certain linguistic groups.

The organisations of newspaper owners and working journalists, aware of their limitations, have chosen to behave as if the problem did not exist or did not concern them. Many of them had preferred to console themselves with the thought that after all the Press Council would come into existence and tackle this and other questions. There is enough indication to show that even politicians in power have been hoping that the Press Council would solve all such problems for them.

Whatever the hopes entertained earlier, it must now be clear to both the Government and the profession that the Press Council suffers from the same limitations as the newspaper industry as a whole. There seems little likelihood of the Press Council becoming an effective instrument of self-regulation in the foreseeable future. In these circumstances, the tendency of both working journalists and the Government to imagine that the Press Council will perform what is essentially their own task can have serious consequences. In fact, such an attitude has in the past led to the multiplication of communal and chauvinistic rags whose sole purpose has been to propagate mutual distrust and hatred among communities and groups of people.

It was no doubt courageous of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference to draw up a Code of Ethics dealing with the publication of news and comments relating to communal propaganda and disturbances. Unfortunately, however, the position of the AINEC in the industry is weaker than that of both organisations of employers like the IENS and ILNA and those of working journalists like the IFWJ. The AINEC is an editors' organisation only in name; it is composed of nominees of the newspaper owners. As such it often feels obliged to put forward the demands of newspaper owners as if they were of vital and immediate concern to editors. The members of the AINEC are incapable of influencing the policies of newspapers. The Press Commission noted this fact and spoke of the need for a genuine organisation of newspaper editors. Thus the AINEC is clearly in no position to enforce any kind of code, lacking the moral stature in the profession needed for this purpose. It is open to serious doubt if the AINEC can make its members adhere to the Code it has drafted. And in recent times at least some of the communal newspapers are reported to have left this organisation.

Communalism is the biggest threat to national unity, but it is by no means the only one today. Divisive forces are at work in various spheres. Linguistic fanaticism has been deliberately fanned by interested parties and groups in different parts of the country, from the DMK in Madras to the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra. The sources of the enormous funds at the disposal of some of these organisations are a mystery and need the fullest investigation. There have been

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allegations of collusion between sections of those in power and the communal and other anti-national forces. The ramifications of these forces are much too strong to be tackled through pious appeals for restraint or by smug proclamations of codes of ethics. Neither the communal nor the other divisive forces can thrive without encouragement from those who wield power and from many of those who constitute the Opposition.

The truth is that the number of those who have determinedly fought such tendencies in the national life have been altogether too small for a task of such gigantic dimensions. Over the years since the attainment of independence, communalists and other varieties of hate-mongers have successfully infiltrated into the ranks of different political parties, apart from setting up their own organisations under a political cloak. Invasion by these of the newspaper industry was a natural corollary. Some of these elements are known to have close ties with certain business houses and other such vested interests.

In short, what has to be tackled is not a stray violation of universally accepted norms of professional conduct but a powerful network whose purpose is to set the common people fighting among themselves by means of false and mischievous propaganda, whether on a communal basis or on other grounds. This sinister network of anti-national

elements cannot be put down by anaemic paper codes. The answer lies in a powerful combination of progressive politicians who believe in democracy, intellectuals in all walks of life, working journalists and those in the seats of power who honestly desire the maintenance of national unity. Only vigorous campaigning by such a combination, along with relentless exposure of mischief-makers, can lead to the elimination from public life of groups which for various reasons find it profitable to spread hatred and incite violence on the basis of communal, linguistic and other slogans.

It is also obvious that unless the attention of the people as a whole is focussed on the need for speedy and radical social and economic changes, and collective mass action is organised on that basis, mischief-bent elements will continue to find a fertile field for their nefarious activities. The record of 1967-68 bears this out, as the bloody trail from Ranchi to Nagpur shows it clearly. In this massive struggle against reaction the newspapers as such have a role certainly, but it is not the central role in a country the vast majority of whose population cannot read a newspaper. That central role has to be played by the politicians and intellectuals, particularly the educated youth, spread all over the country. To mobilise these without delay is the immediate task of those who seek to prevent national disintegration.

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

B K D : RECOGNITION OF AN ABSURDITY

JUST over a year after its formation, the Bharatiya Kranti Dal leaders claim that they have now found the right political direction for this infant party. Now onwards, the BKD will have no truck with "anti-national, anti-democratic and anti-secular" elements. In this broad spectrum of prohibited contacts, the BKD leaders have identified only one element—the Communists.

Consequently, at its National Executive meeting in early June, the BKD has expelled West Bengal unit for the crime of continued association with the State's united front which includes both the Communist Parties.

This, however, is no discovery. The West Bengal BKD, now reverted to the original Bangla Congress, was an integral part of this very united front even before the BKD was born. What is significant is the determination with which the present BKD leadership enforced its newly discovered policy.

Objection to any alliance with the Communists had been raised not once but on several occasions within the BKD. None other than BKD's founding father, Prof Humayun Kabir, has strongly spoken about it during the party's Steering Committee meeting at Lucknow in October last

year. At its Indore Foundation Convention in November, the entire proceedings were derailed over the question of supporting Sri Ajoy Mukherjee who was then Chief Minister of the United Front Government in West Bengal. On his refusal to fall in line with the official policy and promoting the interests of BKD deserters led by Dr P. C. Ghose, Prof Kabir was expelled from the party.

The wheel has now turned full circle. Immediately after the adoption of the resolution on West Bengal by the National Executive on June 4, Sri Charan Singh asked his aide to contact the residence

of Acharya Kripalani as he wanted to have an important talk with Dr P. C. Ghosh then camping in Delhi. Reports have it that contact was being established with Prof Kabir also, but the results have not yet been made known.

This also makes clear the leadership's anxiety to find a suitable prop in West Bengal, and it could think of none other than those earlier expelled from the BKD.

This anxiety is very real. West Bengal's was its sole functioning unit on a State-wide basis. The only other State unit, in Uttar Pradesh, has pockets of BKD allegiance.

With the expulsion of its West Bengal unit, the BKD leadership was faced with a consequential problem—the feasibility of holding the “conference of like-minded parties and individuals” on June 20 and 21 at Simla. Invitees to the conference, besides the parties of the Left such as the SSP, PSP and Forward Bloc, included Prof N. G. Ranga and Sri Minoo Masani of the Swatantra Party.

It, therefore, decided, and very wisely, to postpone the conference indefinitely. It became apparent that none of the invited “like-minded” parties would take the BKD seriously as an organised party of any consequence at this particular juncture after the exit of its West Bengal unit.

At the same time, the BKD has intensified its search for the “like-minded” so as to secure a recognition among them, and thereby establish its identity as a distinct political party. This has become all the more urgent in view of the coming elections in Uttar Pradesh. For the mid-term poll in West Bengal, the BKD leadership is neither prepared, nor bothered very much. There will be a number of “Independents”, as in Haryana, who would like to have a party label. The BKD would be too glad to own them up provided they laid no claim to its cadres, being in acute short supply at present.

Behind all this is clearly noticeable the present BKD leaders' desire to emerge as a Third Force—or at least head the list of the “like-minded” parties which could be hammered into a Third Force. It is only as a Third Force

standing between the Congress and the opposing Leftist parties, especially when it has no mass following in any State except some in UP, that the BKD's bargaining capacity will be increased. Sri Charan Singh's anxiety to evolve this “Third Force” as quickly as possible is the most acute, for among the BKD leaders, he is the only State leader who is really involved in a mid-term poll now. And the psychology of Congress defectors is conditioned by the legislative or parliamentary elections.

BKD, in its essentials, is a product of defections from the Congress, preceding and following the last General Election. All those, victims of the machinations of Congress party bosses, who had correctly gauged the mood of the people, decided to come out of the parent body with the sole aim of “teaching a lesson” to their malefactors. It was to settle scores that a number of local parties mushroomed into existence in different parts of the country. Majority of them knew that the Congress ticket would be denied to them in 1967.

Others, equally oppressed but wise enough to remain on the right side of the party bosses so as not to be left out in the distribution of tickets, waited till after the elections. They even participated in the post-election Congress Ministries, and at an opportune moment, quit the Congress to join hands with the former.

There were still others, like ticketless travellers, who sought temporary refuge in this company, but were always on the look out for better opportunities elsewhere.

The deliberations at its first organising convention at Patna in May last year, showed clearly this trait. Individuals like Dr P. C. Ghose and Acharya Kripalani made no bones about their opposition to anything smacking of “kranti” or “socialism”. Sri V. K. Krishna Menon was also seen in this company, but that was for the last time. It was Sri Mahamaya Prasad Sinha's pleadings with the participants that if ever the party to be formed deviated from the Gandhian principles, he and his supporters would be out of it, that kept the convention

going.

To this convention came Sri Niharendu Dutt Majumdar, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India in the thirties, and now a bitter anti-Communist. He represented the so-called Indian Federation of Independent Trade Unions. (Incidentally, the organisation has, some time ago, disclaimed his association with it.) He is now a member of the BKD National Executive.

Two other trade unionists of repute present at the convention were Dr Maitreyee Bose and Sri Kali Mukherjee of the West Bengal INTUC. They had pleaded for building up mass organisations and mass base of the new party. Sri Mukherjee went further to urge that the party should become the nodal point for all “social democrats” in the country, including major sections of the SSP and PSP. According to him, after the debacle of the Rightists (Congress), the country would surely look for something “mid-way” to the extreme Left represented by the Communists. Dr Bose never joined the BKD, and Sri Mukherjee dropped out after the party's foundation convention at Indore.

Prof Kabir, the prime mover in the formation of the BKD, had just then returned from a prolonged sojourn in the USA, and was naturally full of admiration for everything American. He held that the ills of the country could best be tackled and reformed through a federal system of administration, on the US pattern, with greater power devolving on the lower and primary units. Decentralisation was his theme.

However, a common point in the understanding of the leading lights of the BKD was that the election “victory” against the Congress could be consolidated only through governmental power, with the party serving as a secondary element in the process. Thus, legislatures and Parliament were to be the focal point of all its activities.

The reason was not far to seek. By the time of the Patna convention, the entire northern region, from Amritsar to Calcutta, was under non-Congress united front

governments. Orissa, Madras and Kerala had also left the Congress fold. There were fond hopes that the phenomenon would engulf the entire country sooner or later, and a "legislative revolution" would be easy to bring about.

It is this lure of an easy "legislative revolution" that enveloped the thinking of the BKD. The draft of the party's constitution prepared by Prof Kabir, and adopted with some changes, reflected this understanding completely. Although it underlined the need to build up a mass party and sectional organisations of workers, peasants, youth, women etc., its central point remained the capture of seats in the legislative and parliamentary elections. The support of the masses was, no doubt, sought, but only for that limited purpose.

The BKD set Gandhian socialism as its objective. The word "socialism" was necessary, it was said at Patna, because its absence would make the proposed and existing alliances with some of the non-Congress parties untenable. It was a tactical need, and agreed to as such.

But to the younger elements who had contributed the most in bringing about the fall of the Congress in several parts of the country, the BKD had little to offer. Its programme of decentralisation of industries, remunerative price to the agricultural producers, and a concerted effort to wipe out unemployment, had little to offer them as an inspiration. It was not for nothing that at the Indore convention, a young UP delegate, Sri Jafar Imam (now secretary of UP unit),

angrily intervened when Sri Mahamaya Prasad Sinha was being garlanded on his election as BKD chairman. He demanded that instead of wasting time in getting himself bedecked with flowers, Sri Sinha should talk of a programme of activities. (The impatience of the younger elements with the power-hungry leaders was expressed again in May this year when the party's Secretary, Sri S. Gopal Shastri, submitted his resignation. Sri Shastri, although persuaded to withdraw it, had bitterly complained about the absence of any programme of activity and any desire on the part of the leaders to build up a mass party.)

But the leadership's confidence in itself remained unshaken because it had no less than three Chief Ministers, of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal, and a Deputy Chief Minister, of Orissa, already in its bag. Additionally, the anti-Congress sentiments had received a new fillip with the formation of a non-Congress Ministry in Madhya Pradesh.

As a result, despite the serious West Bengal imbroglio following the October 2 events (when Sri Ajoy Mukherjee changed his mind and decided not to desert the United Front) the leadership carried the day at the Indore convention in November. Prof Kabir, sensing the mood of the delegates, did not launch an open attack on Sri Ajoy Mukherjee. He suggested, if the BKD could have united front with the Jan Sangh in Uttar Pradesh and the Swatantra Party in Orissa, there was nothing wrong in a coalition with the Congress in West Bengal. The immediate reaction of the delegates came in

the shape of angry shouts, with unsavoury epithets like "American agent", "Congress agent", and the like.

Fortified with this, but still unable to provide a concrete programme of action for the party, the leadership set about to save the West Bengal United Front Ministry. At Indore, the conflict between Sri Ajoy Mukherjee and Prof Kabir completely overshadowed all the convention proceedings, giving the impression that the future of the BKD as a political party rallying all non-Congress elements, was inextricably linked with the future of the West Bengal Ministry. And this proved to be true in the coming period.

The dismissal of the West Bengal United Front Ministry deprived BKD of a Chief Minister. It had little use of Sri Ajoy Mukherjee as a political leader without governmental power, particularly when the pro-Left and mass-agitation stance of the West Bengal unit was not the leadership's cup of tea. The fall of the Bihar Ministry and the resignation of Sri Charan Singh in quick succession, dismayed the BKD still more, shattering its hope of consolidation through the agency of governmental power.

Measures to regain power were to be adopted and obstacles in achieving it had to be removed. The process found its first expression at the National Executive meeting at Patna on February 24 and 25 this year. Sri Dutt Majumdar questioned BKD alliance with Communists in West Bengal. But the Executive as a whole was still undecided and instead adopted a resolution con-

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gratulating Sri Mukherjee for the mass agitation which brought forth the President's Rule and opened the way for mid-term poll in West Bengal.

Meanwhile, the leaders had also initiated talks with "like-minded" parties for a new type of understanding, primarily based on electoral adjustments and convenience. In this effort the initiative rests with Sri Charan Singh, particularly in view of the mid-term poll in Uttar Pradesh. It was during these approaches that the present BKD leadership found the West Bengal unit a drag, and the decision was arrived at that Sri Ajoy Mukherjee should be asked to quit the United Front in which the dominance of the Communists had been questioned by other "like-minded" parties.

With power gone out of their hands, the BKD leaders found themselves in difficulty in respect of necessary party finances also. At its Delhi meeting in early April, the National Executive fixed levies totalling Rs 5,550 per month. Sri Charan Singh, Sri Kumbha Ram Arya (Rajya Sabha MP from Rajasthan), and the West Bengal and Maharashtra units were

required to collect Rs. 1,000 each. Mahamaya Babu and the Ramgarh Raja were asked to raise Rs 750. The well-known hotel magnate and the BKD Treasurer, Sri M. S. Oberoi, who hosts the BKD Executive meetings at his posh five-star deluxe Intercontinental Hotel, was to contribute Rs 250. However, the fund raising drive does not seem to have made much headway. With the Raja and the West Bengal unit out of the BKD, there is already a shortfall of Rs 1,750. Others do not seem to have done their bit either, so that the complaints about shortage of funds even to run the BKD central office officially persists.

Thus, the BKD has now also to seek sources for funds, in addition to support. Both will be in great demand during the coming period with a mid-term poll on hand. But so long as it is Oberoi-backed and has other similar parties at its beck and call, the question of financial shortage is not taken seriously. Many of the BKD leaders, having not much of their own to count upon, will naturally have to seek both from sources that are willing to provide, no matter what the conditions.

The story of BKD's present predicament has an important lesson for forward-looking elements in our political life. With the crack up of the Colossus that was Congress, there appeared a tendency to get together all the dissidents irrespective of their political complexion or calibre. The result has often been a strange conglomeration which can provide stability neither to political life nor to its own ranks. Dissidence by itself can never be an ideology nor can it for long pass off as a political alternative.

The Holy Roman Empire was described by an eminent historian as neither holy, nor Roman, nor even an empire. It may with equal effect be said of BKD that it is neither Bharatiya, nor having anything to do with *kranti*, not even a *dal* in the proper sense of the term. It is an absurdity thrown up by the euphoria of non-Congressism. It has yet to claim an identity for itself. Or, will it be thrown into the limbo without even having a nuisance value? Perhaps Sri Charan Singh can provide the answer.

June 10

Observer

NEHRU'S WARNING

THE Congress relied on mass enthusiasm. The moment that mass enthusiasm can be turned against it, the very thing on which it relied, it can suppress us. I am putting these things deliberately in an exaggerated way. I do not think the position is so bad. But I am putting it in an exaggerated way so that you may appreciate the danger of the situation. I think, on the other hand, there is a hopeful side of the situation too. The Congress would not have lost seats merely if some people were sitting at the top. It has lost because, in the final analysis, there are all over India considerable number of people, honest and hard working people who worked for the Congress in the past, were its back-bone and strength, and they are not active today.

I warn you, I deliberately emphasise on this aspect because you should realise what we are up against. It may be the Communist Party in one place, it may be something else in any other place. It may turn the very mass enthusiasm on which we relied all these years against you. A revolution, it is said, always swallows up those who create it—whether it is in France or Russia or elsewhere. Well, our revolution is a quite different one. We cannot draw that analogy. I would put it in this way—the very force that the Congress has created outruns that Congress and the Congress is left behind. Therefore, you have to always understand those forces, you have to keep peace with those forces....

We started the mass movements thirty-four years ago, we directed them, we profited by them. Another type of movement comes and we are left behind. We complain so and so has done this or that. It may be true or not, but the fact is that we become out of date. Speed of youth, of mind and body goes from us organisationally and we go on struggling, trying to catch up something which is ahead of us. But first of all every organisation and every major force depends on the quality of mind. Without the intellectual leadership, you may lose sometime, may be after considerable time. In the final analysis, mind is the governing factor and the intellectual leadership it gives. Secondly, the spirit behind the organisation, the crusading spirit, the belief in a cause and working for a cause. These are the two major things which rather overlap, which make up an organisation. The rest is detail—though very important detail—but detail.

—Jawaharlal Nehru addressing a closed-door meeting of Congressmen in Delhi early 1957.

Whither Nagaland ?—III

PANNALAL DAS GUPTA

A very relevant question about the Naga problem is the origin of the Nagas' unending hatred of India. If the reason is economic or political, it should be possible of solution as there can be no economic or political condition that cannot be changed. In the case of the Nagas, however, economic or political factors are secondary, the primary factor is the psychological barrier.

In view of the misgivings, doubts, fears and apprehensions, rooted in the Naga psyche, there is little possibility of simple, straightforward arguments being able to carry conviction with them. It can be said that on certain matters the Naga mind is closed. The annual internal revenue of the Nagaland Government may not be more than half a million rupees. Out the Government of India's annual subvention to the State Government comes to about twenty crore rupees. If this money is properly utilised, it should be possible to do a lot: develop road communications, start new schools and colleges, improve agriculture and undertake a programme of industrialization. From the economic point of view, there should be no cause of complaint if the twenty crore rupees is spent properly for a population of four lakhs. That development work has made considerable headway in Nagaland since after the ceasefire is a fact that the Nagas—even the rebel Nagas—cannot refute. Despite this, however, it cannot be said that they have any sense of gratitude for the Government

of India.

From the political point of view, even if it is categorically stated in a future Constitution of India that the Nagas have voluntarily and spontaneously chosen to stay with India, that they will not be forced to remain in India and that all the constituent States and nationalities are in the Indian Union of their own accord and that they will not be forced to remain as part of India—if, we repeat, such a *carte blanche* provision is embodied in the Constitution, the reasons given by the Nagas—or for that matter other non-Naga tribes and sub-tribes—for secession from India will lose their validity at one stroke. Because such a constitutional provision will have made it clear that nobody who does not like to be Indian is going to be forcibly Indianized.

Not Absurd

True, there are many obstacles to such a provision being incorporated in the Constitution but there is no reason to think it absurd or impossible. It cannot be asserted that the State structure of India has been decided upon once and for all. Throughout the country new questions are being raised about Centre-State relations and about the nature and extent of the powers of the States, including the extent of the State autonomy.

Even a man like Sri Rajagopalachari, who can, by no stretch of imagination, be called a progressive of a revolutionary, is in favour of giving independence to the Nagas and then signing a treaty of friendship with them. He believes that acceptance of a friendly, independent Nagaland standing guard over the north-

eastern frontier of India will solve all problems. He even pleads for admitting the Nagas to the Indian army, just as the Gurkhas or Nepalis are admitted, though the latter are not Indians. Without taking an extreme position like that of Rajaji, it may still be possible to find out a political solution of the Naga problem.

But then where will this urge to search for a solution come from? It cannot be a one-sided game. All the parties must earnestly try for it. It is here that the psychological factor comes in. If, however, either the Nagas or the Indian leaders or the political parties or the common people take a hostile attitude, if the misgivings, fears, apprehensions and hatred dominate their thinkings, no rational discussion—whether political or economic—is possible.

In the last analysis, therefore, the question is psychological. One has to get at the root of the Nagas' and other tribes hatred of India. From a closer look at this aspect of the problem, it seems that the past or the present conflicts of the Nagas with India are not the only cause of the hatred, though it is true that the conflicts have made the hatred more acute. There are other causes and factors as well, which get mixed up with this obvious cause and find expression in it. We shall later discuss these 'other causes'. Let us first turn to the obvious cause that has poisoned the whole atmosphere.

More than one division of the army is now stationed in Nagaland. At present there is not much complaint of direct oppression against the army. It could be gathered from discussions with the army authorities that they are

The first two instalments of this report appeared in Mainstream, June 1 and 8, 1968.

watchful that the armed personnel do not misbehave with the Nagas, but the first sight that greets the eye on coming to Nagaland is the troops occupying the tallest hilltop in every village and fortifying themselves there. It may not be a "sight" to those who live in the State or to those Indian employees who have long been working in the State, because they have become accustomed to it. But a newcomer visiting the hilly villages and going out along the few roads that are there will be first struck by the sight of these armed fortifications.

Peculiar Reaction

The foxholes and bunkers—entrenched positions to shoot from—create a peculiar mental reaction. One gets the impression that an army, coming from outside, has established itself like an incubus on the State and these villages. The obtrusive existence of the Indian armed forces makes every Naga feel that he is living under an army of occupation. The irritating mental reaction of the common Nagas is not lessened if the army or the armed police or the Assam Rifles do not leave their barracks, do not enter the villages or harass the people. The rebel Nagas can always point an accusing finger at them and tell the people that these non-Nagas are sitting on their chest. The rebels can and do recall many bitter memories and bloody deeds for which the armed forces were responsible. The Nagas had been witnesses to many attacks and counter-attacks, killings, casualties and acts of arson before the ceasefire came into force. The situation is different now, peace prevails in the State, but still it is not difficult to connect the armed forces with the reign of terror that prevailed in those days. It seemed to me that one of the permanent sources of bitterness, hatred, doubt and fear of the Nagas is these entrenched positions of the Indian army.

The first and major step, therefore, toward permanent peace in Nagaland should be to remove these army entrenchments from the village tops to other places. On the one hand it will quieten the uneasy minds of the normally peace-loving Nagas and help to create a tension-free con-

dition, while on the other, it will make it difficult for the rebels to poison the minds of the people. One of the problems that the Nagaland peace Mission, consisting of Michael Scott, Jayaprakash Narayan and B. P. Chaliha, had to face, was the Naga demand for the withdrawal of the Indian army. The Government of India made the counter-demand that the rebel Nagas surrender their arms or hand them over to a neutral peace mission. After that the troops would be withdrawn, as far as practicable. The point of the Union Government and the State Government was that the troops had been stationed in the villages for the protection of the peace-loving citizens. In other words, the armed personnel had been kept in the villages for fear of possible use of arms by the rebels and, therefore, no unilateral steps could be taken. If the rebels gave up arms, the Government of India was also prepared to withdraw the troops.

If such a reciprocal measure can be agreed and acted upon, there will be no Naga problem. The rebels give up arms and the Government of India withdraws its army from Nagaland. It means that the rebels are satisfied politically and the Government of India is satisfied about the trustworthiness of the Nagas. But negotiations for such a conditional peace failed. The rebels refused to give up arms and the Government of India did not withdraw the army.

Fear of Clashes

It is worth considering, however, whether the Government of India can take the risk of a unilateral withdrawal of troops. It is known and admitted on all hands that the Naga people in general want to maintain peace. The rebels are also aware that the people do not want a return to the days of terror. This awareness urged them to a unilateral extension of ceasefire till July 31. As explained earlier, the village people are afraid of reprisals from both the rebels and the security forces. They are eager that their material conditions are improved rapidly that transport and communication and education make rapid strides. But the fear of renewed

clashes between the rebel and the loyal Nagas or between the rebels and the security forces on some pretext or other, constantly haunts them.

The main task is to ensure that the hands of the peace-loving masses who are still on tenterhooks are strengthened, that they are eventually able to assert themselves. What could be the possible result if the Government of India, as a one-sided step, withdraws the troops from the village tops? Possibly, it will take the wind out of the rebel sails, inasmuch as they will no longer be able to point their fingers to an "enemy" sitting on their heads with guns at the ready. It is improbable that the rebels will take advantage of the situation and occupy the villages. Even now they are openly moving about in the villages with great bravado, carrying arms with them. It is wrong to assume that the rebel terrorists will take over the villages as soon as they are vacated by the Indian army and that their next step would be to engage the Indian army itself.

Rebel Tactics

At the same time, one has to think of the possible tactics of the rebels. I raised this question in various ways and in various quarters to get an idea of the probable rebel course of action. The rebels obviously do not and cannot put all their cards on the table. They cannot be expected to disclose their tactical line to the "enemy" or to outsiders. I asked Major-General Rawley, the GOC of Nagaland, what, in his opinion, could be the rebel mode of attack or of striking terror in the event of renewed hostilities. Would they resort to a series of *coups de main* to capture the towns? Or, would they first seize the villages and make them springboards for local seizure of power? The Major-General discounted all these possibilities. They, in his opinion, could only resort to stray ambushes or murders to keep the people terrorized.

What the Major-General did not or could not say or the political questions that usually do not arise in their minds accustomed to the military way of thinking, are—as has, already been mentioned

(*Mainstream*, June 8)—the political repercussions of the Naga-China collusion. Whatever arms and training the rebels may get out of the collusion, they will have to accept Chinese direction and leadership on questions of strategy and tactics. As noted earlier, the Chinese have advised the rebels against falling the Indian army within the confines of Nagaland. The Chinese have advised them to extend the battlefront over a far wider area, and spread the flames of rebellion among the NEFA, Mizo, Mikir Garo, Manipuri, Khasi and Jaintia tribes and even among the plains tribes of the Brahmaputra Valley.

Naga-China Collusion

The effectiveness of the policy of fortifying the village tops by the Indian army is rendered useless by the strategy and tactics advised by the Chinese. And then, if troops have to be mobilized in strength on every village top or on every road to prevent escalation and extension of the area of conflict, almost the entire army will have to be pinned down in the north-eastern India to prevent possible eruption of violence in this region. That is precisely what the rebels want the Government of India to do. This will confine the Indian army in a limited area and slow down its mobility. In the long run, it will expose the country to greater dangers.

Judged against the perspective of the prevailing condition of a general confrontation, the first imperative is to create political loyalty in all the hill tribes of the north-eastern frontier of India. The political answer is the most effective answer to the mounting challenge and that answer can be given only by a politically contented people.

I asked Major-General Rawley whether there could be a military solution of the problem if no political solution was forthcoming and if hostilities broke out again. About a year and a half ago, I had posed the same question to his predecessor, Major-General Kalyan Singh, who told me categorically that there could be no

military solution. Once the army was given a general order to go into action, the army could not, he had explained, differentiate the rebels from the loyals. And once the order was given, the army had to act in a way as if the Nagas were not Indians, as if all of them were foreigners and rebels.

Is it, however, possible to take unrestricted repressive measures against a part of our own people and will the national political leaders permit it? Major-General Kalyan Singh was clearly against such a step. To his successor, Major-General Rawley, the question has come in a slightly different form, owing to the liaison that a section of the rebels has already established with China. A good number of the rebels have gone to China for arms and training and some of them have also come back on completion of their training. The problem of putting down the Naga rebels has become an international problem because of the Naga-China collusion. To put it differently, though the Naga problem is a general political problem, Chinese involvement in it makes it a military problem and requires us to be prepared for meeting a military contingency too.

The Real Question

Even so, the present Major-General does not think that a military solution is possible of whatever can still be characterized as the Naga problem. According to him, whatever number of troops we commit to Nagaland, it is impossible for them to find out the rebel Nagas hiding themselves in small groups in inaccessible hills and impenetrable forests and forestall their ambushes. Looked at from this point of view, no military purpose is being served by fortifying the village tops. The real question is, who or what forces will be strengthened by the withdrawal of the troops from the Naga villages. We maintain, the peace-loving masses will be relieved by the step proposed, and the rebels will be deprived of the major weapon with which they have so long been poisoning the people against India. Consequently, the people will feel more loyal to India. To be sure, there

is some risk in it, namely, that the rebels may get emboldened and move about with greater bravado. But that will make them still more unpopular with the masses.

We have already pointed out the fact that in the present situation of Nagaland, the rebel Nagas are becoming more and more useless and antisocial. We have seen that they are not helping or cooperating in the development programmes now being implemented. They are quite aloof from it, sitting idle, as it were, with gun in hand. Such a mode of existence for a long time will make them an unmitigated social evil. If the army comes away from the villages, the last political justification for their gangster-like existence will be gone. They will fail to adduce any political, economic, or social rationale of their present activities. A major cause of discontent will thus be removed.

In view of the new danger posed by the Pak-China-Naga alliance, strengthening our defences along the international borders has become an urgent necessity. Border roads should be well developed, the army moved to the border areas and fortifications made. If it is not practicable to deploy the army in the border areas all at once, a phased programme should be undertaken to vacate groups of villages and send the troops thus released to the borders.

(To be Continued)

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Assassination Theories

'WHAT do you think was the motive, Mr. President?' asked Charvaka.

He was addressing the question to the President of the Invisible Government of the United States.

'Waal,' said the President, 'there were a lotta motives, if you really want to know.'

'Yet, Mr. President,' said Charvaka, 'there must have been the strongest motive of them all? At least, the strongest according to the FBI?'

'Aw,' said the President, 'this: that Abe Lincoln was enjoying that goddamn play at old Ford's.'

'Do you guess it was a bad play?' asked Charvaka.

'The FBI,' said the President, 'has all the clippings of what the theatre critics had written.....'

'Never trust the blokes, Mr. President,' said Charvaka. 'They write their reviews without ever seeing the play properly.'

'All the same,' said the President, 'the play was lousy. The *Washington Post* had asked Mrs. Lincoln immediately after the event, "But otherwise Mrs. Lincoln, how did you enjoy the play?" She made it clear that her view of the play wasn't at all prejudiced by the unfortunate accident. She just found the play lousy.'

'That's on record, sir?' asked Charvaka.

'You ought to see the archives of our democracy,' said the President, 'some day.'

'I would love to,' said Charvaka. 'But if I remember right, Mr. President, there was some sort of trouble in the States at that time?'

'You're talking of the anti-draft business?' said the President.

Charvaka tried to remember. 'Or the hippies?' suggested the President again.

'I've got it!' said Charvaka. 'The Civil War!'

The President chewed gum. 'What about the Civil War?' he asked.

Charvaka remembered his old declamation lessons. 'Four score and seven years ago,' he recited, 'our fathers brought forth on this land.....'

'Again,' said the President, 'that was a bad performance. The Gettysberg speech was full of mistakes.'

'NO!' said Charvaka. 'Don't tell me Old Abe didn't have a proper press aide, someone like Mr. B. G. Verghese.'

'He did have someone like that,' said the President. 'And that was the hitch. Anyway, look at those precious bloomers: *dedicated to the proposition*, says the speech, *that all men are created equal*. It ought to have been *were created equal*, since creation was a past act, long before the Depression or even the Gold Rush, and certainly before the Great Society where all men are prosperous and unequal.'

'Otherwise, Mr. President,' asked Charvaka, 'do you think Mrs. Lincoln enjoyed the speech?'

'Certainly not,' said the President. 'Like the play, she found the speech lousy.'

'But, Mr. President,' said Charvaka, 'perhaps the Civil War had something to do with it?'

'You mean a white backlash to the emancipation?' said the President. 'That's far fetched.'

The President continued, 'The assassin came to the United States at the age of twelve. A year before that he was eleven. And yet another year before he was ten!'

Charvaka sat up. 'And a year before that,' said he in horror, 'he was nine?'

'That's right,' said the President. 'The FBI found it out by deciphering the hieroglyphics of

Abu Simbel.'

'NO!' said Charvaka.

'Yes,' said the President. 'The writings on the temples of Abu Simbel, which proved the Arabs didn't condemn the crime. After all didn't they build the pyramids?'

'Oh, yes,' said Charvaka. 'The pyramids. What massive evidence! How could anyone have missed it all these years!'

'Now you see it, don't you,' said the President. 'On the solid evidence of the pyramids, the Great Wall of China, the Roman Walls, the leaning Tower of Pisa, the Sistine Chapel etc., it has been established that there was no conspiracy behind the assassination, no serious conspiracy that is.'

'You mean, sir,' said Charvaka in sudden comprehension, 'it was a non-CIA conspiracy?'

'That's right,' said the President.

'I'm tempted to add a theory myself,' said Charvaka, who was getting into the spirit of the thing now. 'The assassin had also something to do with the rice agitation in Kerala. He thought that maybe the shooting of Lincoln would force the Centre to send the promised rice supplies to Trivandrum.'

'Boy!' said the President. 'This is the best theory I've heard. You ought to join us in the Invisible Government. A fellowship, subsidy, outright dole, what would you like?'

'Outright dole,' said Charvaka.

The President held out his hand.

'It's a promise,' said the President. 'But now, I've a cabinet meeting to attend. I must be going.'

'Good bye, Mr. President!' said Charvaka.

The President turned and turned invisible.

—Charvaka

Dull Soshits

How to Look at Public Sector

E. H.

I suppose only after one has risen from the dead will one be able to convince industrialists and our middle-class pseudo-intellectuals of the amount of tosh they utter about the Public Sector—the socialist sector. In fact, I feel, when I read articles written by such people—much as I do when I hear touts trainers and nouveau riche-owners talking about horses—neither lot knows what it is talking about. All they do is to sentimentalize and confuse the issue.

So far as the Public Sector is concerned, it should have meant the key to sufficiency for India. Through its products *should* have been rising many giant electrical net-works, irrigation schemes, new key and essential industries and growth of automative, locomotive, mining, moving transforming machinery. This in turn would have given rise to technical thinking, motivation and employment on a nation-wide scale. The present 60 to 80 per cent human emphasis in rural areas would have been soaked up and re-deployed into new areas of industrial, intellectual and construction activity instead.

This is what has *not* happened, and why has it not happened? That is the question we have to answer ourselves. But do we ask ourselves this question? Some thinking people must be doing so; but they are just too afraid or too unsure of themselves. Many may feel that "this is a technical matter and I must not air my ignorance." In fact the problem is *the* vital problem of India today. If it is not solved intellectually and democratically, it will be solved by force. Here indeed lies one of the two bootstraps through which India can possibly lift itself up (The other is intensified and modernized agriculture). For without this, what appears to be growth, is not. In fact, what people refer to as growth is, most of it wasteful competition and far too great a deal of it leads to a pipeline through which earnings of industry from within India are repatriated abroad. The biggest financial beneficiary from such foreign earnings in India, today is the United Kingdom. It will be interesting to know how much of a loaf of bread on an average English table is earned in India.

Thus, those who have shining new or thriving industries deliberately keep alive the myth of things like "genuine", "foreign" made with technical collaboration of "—". Small-scale industries which are in fact economically most wasteful are full of such collaboration. Even the bigger industries, privately owned, are thus oriented.

The first major breakthrough of foreign investors came during the days of British rule. It was under the pretext that supplies for the army in India could no longer be dependent on Britain alone. This started toward the later half of the last century. Hence Kanpur, Icchapur, Jabbalpur, Shahjahanpur, all developed defence-based industry. But while, for instance, there was an ordnance factory for harness and saddlery, the leather was bought from the British owned Cooper Allen; while uniforms were made at Shahjahanpur, the cloth came from the British-owned "Lalimli" and "Spinners". British-owned industries in India, particularly round Calcutta were also gradually set up by pure adventurers like Forbes, Nixon, Shaw and Martin who having made illicit fortunes in government service before, or having a little bit saved up, decided to start anew in India. The history of Kilburns alone will reveal the amazing truth of how such a company started here with a few rupees and is now a multicore public or private limited company. What is the money then that they repatriate and who pays?

Indian labour is cheap, its standard of living is very low. Raw material prices are low largely because the producer (such as jute growers) receives very low return for his produce. What is manufactured is sold to the government after all the tricks of tendering and other standard devices. A lot of under-invoicing and other such further devices having been practised, as much as is demanded there, is sold abroad. So through its labourers and raw material producers India gets the rock bottom. Government pays from its internal revenues, which are largely collected through taxes, and if protection has been put on the item, internally, the manufacturer gets a profit out of all proportion to existing prices elsewhere. This profit is shared with his collaborators. The collaborator either invests a small proportion of capital and charges for "knowhow" or else his share is the supply of machinery and "experts". So his input is the minimum and his share handsome.

This is the inside look of private industry as it is today; largely built either on enormous accumulations made through callous exploiting by past British adventures, or by collaboration with foreign firms. Both the routes of development, as also those who have come to positions of affluence through these avenues had and have at heart only the profitability of their enterprises. To them this is the end-all and

be-all of industry. They will pay labour double if labour produces four times. Is this however, what will provide food and health and plenty for the teeming millions of India? Obviously not more than a fraction. Profitably-run industries in the private sector judged by these yardsticks could have helped reduce income tax and divert money, but the question of India's prosperity growth and modernization would have remained in the same closed cupboard, even if a few shelves higher looked seemingly less empty.

Quick Switch

In fact, in the Gandhian era the cry of "Swadeshi" hit British monopoly badly. Of all those who cashed in on it, none did himself better than the money-lenders to the Scindhia and other rulers, that is, the house of Birla. But being the shrewd financiers they were, they backed the Swaraj movement with their money in order to make more money. It was not surprising therefore that as soon as Swaraj looked like becoming a reality these men switched quickly over and made firm long-term collaboration contracts with the ruling and oppressing nuclei of empire. The device was simple and the switch-over smooth. The first big collaboration turned out to be over the Morris Oxford Motor car. It still could not have an English name, so it was called a "Hindustan". But it gave the first green signal and soon Sarabhai, Bajaj and others went into deals. It took only a little time to discard such covert subterfuges as Indian sounding names and we went straight to Sen Raleigh, Bajaj Tempo and so on. Now their position is fully consolidated.

It has always been a British axiom, "If you cannot fight them, join them". Though this joining had to be shown as a starting point only, it had to be ensured that the situation should develop in the direction of greater and greater dependence by collaboration, not the reverse. Partition of India was the first stepping stone. It ensured, firstly permanent internal enmity and thus, defence wastage and, more important, the facing of basic internal problems enough to keep both countries dependant. It thus made it a foregone conclusion that Nehru would have to eat his words of a few months previous and remain firmly in the Empire—"A rose by any other name".....

In face of this vice-like grip, Professor Mahalanobis, on instructions from Jawaharlal Nehru was set the impossible task of planning a Socialist pattern. The Congress resolution of a "socialist pattern of society" rolled easily enough off the tongue and magnifying itself through the loudspeakers at Avadi awoke a sudden hope in the hearts of the gullible, cynicism in the hearts of the opposition Left, and surprise in the minds of objective thinkers. "How", some said "could such a society come about" and "what did socialist pattern mean other than the public ownership of all means of production?"

It was pretty obvious from the start that Congress had even less intentions of making a Socialist pattern than the British labourites Attlee, Gaitskell and Wilson. In any case it was infinitely more easy for the trade union based Labour Party of UK to shift Left than for the Congress to do so. For, all those holding the purse-strings of the party had mov-

ed into the camp of private collaboration.

Therefore, Mahalanobis had to move warily. The First Five Year Plan had emphasized the toning up of agriculture and setting up fertilizer plants. It aimed at building power and irrigation projects so as to be able to get to industrialization in the Second Plan. Mahalanobis intention had been to set up a Heavy Engineering complex, and from it to build steel plants and other things. This with Hindustan Machine Tools Bangalore and the Bhopal project for Heavy Electrical equipment would give an industrial infra-structure to the socialist pattern of industry, and through it to society.

With great difficulty the Heavy Electricals could get accepted; some ICS mathematician however worked out that India would never need more than 1.7 million tons of iron and steel per annum in the foreseeable future, so a heavy engineering plant would be useless. The great Socialist-Patternwallas accepted the ICS mathematics, so the question was pushed out for consideration for the third plan.

However, Jawaharlal Nehru had been to the USSR in 1955 and had been much impressed by its industry. He had already forced through the Bhilai project, much to the annoyance of those who subsidized his party. He then resuscitated the idea of Heavy Engineering. The Russians who worked out the need for India recommended a plant that would build a two million-ton steel plant every year. Even this rate of growth, they said, would be too slow; but they built into it the ability to make another complex exactly like the one they were proposing. Thus they planned, the Indian iron and steel industry would snowball and have a chance by the turn of the century to provide the per capita amount of metal to ensure an adequately affluent society in India.

New Demands

But to the bureaucrats in New Delhi the Russian could not be relied on and a gentleman called Sir Eric Coates from that benevolent and friendly country England (which wanted so much to see India really go ahead) was sent for and asked to assess the Russian proposal. Sir Eric took a thorough look and at once said that the whole scheme should be dropped. When Nehru showed resolution not to do so, Sir Eric said 20 thousand tons capacity should be the limit. This figure was accepted. Heavy Engineering was introduced into India for the first time. After the construction was started for the third plan and on Russian insistence Nehru himself laid down that 45 million tons—that is, the ability to build one steel plant of one million tons per year—should be the installed capacity of the Ranchi plant.

It stands to reason that as the plant goes underway it will create new demands of raw materials and ancillary items not indigenously made. These should of course normally be planned for and worked out at the time of the detailed project estimate of the factory itself. The ideal being for ancillary items and supplies of raw material to be ready at the same time as the plant goes into production. Seldom if ever has this been given a thought and it is enough to observe that at one time the need for imports will increase and grow, and the simplest of simple economists can point this out.

At this point therefore the correct emphasis on imports should have had a crucial bearing on future growth. Here is where most of the obscurantism and confusion are deliberately injected on a broad as well as a concentrated front. People get up and ask innocently in Parliament, how much return there has been for capital invested, various committees inquiring into the working of the public sector make solemn pronouncements on the failure of management. A good deal of "information" is fed in by private princes of industry to the unsuspecting representatives of the people. Articles of great "wisdom" are also written to show what a flop the factory must prove to be, that an elephant is about to give birth to a mouse. If this is not enough, the Ministry is bombarded with questions from the public and in turn the management concerned is asked to answer the most irrelevant questions about finance and profits and anything else which may occur to a lay mind.

Mystifying Replies

In this respect, Hindustan Steel has probably taken a larger share of criticism on its head than any other public-sector corporation. It is however mystifying and discouraging to note the line of defensive argument and the escapist replies of Dr Chenna Reddy. A person of his age should have been far more conscious of the future than he apparently seemed to be. Is the "evil thereof" now "sufficient unto the day" for him? One would have thought not. In fact, we had hoped for a 'new deal' during his stewardship. Not that "out of the right" he could have been entirely the "captain of his soul"; but why on April 5, 1968, did he have to confess Rs 120 crores loss and try to excuse himself for being compared with the private sector because of the "high capital structure and the special products that they have been assigned to produce"?

As if this were not enough Dr Reddy gave four reasons for poor performance followed by gloom all round : (1) High capital cost; (2) the Rs 9.3 crore fertilizer plant at Rourkela described as a "drag" on the main steel plant there; (3) the product pattern of plants "impose a limitation on profitability"; (4) lastly, the familiar cry of gestation periods.

After this depressing performance, he on April 16 "in a burst of enthusiasm" promised steel for everything, and said that Russia might lift upto one million tons of steel. Apparently, the mesmerized audience forgot to ask why the second biggest steel producer in the world wanted one million tons from a backward country.

Of course the answer to steel lies in the same sphere as the answer to Heavy Electricals, Bhopal, thinking of making refrigerators, and Heavy Engineering switching to railway, defence and rig production. The quarters built for staff and workers are considered a heavy burden, whereas quarters by the million are needed for our people today. The millions of tons of products through whose existence billions of foreign exchange has been saved, and the millions and millions of rupees worth of growth, know-how and industrial advance that India has made—are they not really a good enough argument for the existence, continuance and acceleration of the public sector?

When a public-sector factory has reached the

planned stage where imports for it *have* to increase, there must be at least a proportionate decrease of imports elsewhere, and this is the process whereby the industrial needs of the country should have been proportionately met and the priorities shifted to the public sector. That this has not happened is a primary cause for disfunctioning of the public sector.

There are other causes. The story of Bokaro too is a story typical of know-how being misused and of restrictions elsewhere telling on the project. Its management started as a very dedicated little band. It cannot be said it was functionally full of ICS officers. The Soviet Union was ready to give it the highest priority; but the project is today in the doldrums. And why should it not be, when the word recession is put out to include Bokaro and all steel and other plants.

Recession is not an isolated phenomenon. In 1928-30 it was called the great slump. Now it has a more acceptable sounding name which is less depressing to the ears. It was exactly this phase of slump in the West which the then only socialist country in the world (the USSR) took advantage of to slip along fast. There was no recession in the USSR, only growth. A moment's reflection should show that in India too the public sector should be taking up slack in growth; not working all out to earn exports—indeed, exports of such vital things as rolling stock, ferrous materials and cement. They are being exported with the ostensible aim of paying for vital importers.

Sales—Vital Point

That this is not so can be proved by quoting Hindustan Machine Tools. Speaking, from memory, they used to export about Rs 10 crores of machine tools which they still are doing, but owing to over-production and competition in the West this may decrease. In fact, the low cost of Indian labour is (shocking to say) one of the chief marginal differences which maintains a demand for our machines, which are as good as any one else's. However, about Rs 30 crores worth used to be sold in India; but through one excuse or another the private sector imported somewhere between Rs 20 and 30 crores worth under the import relaxation of 1967. The consequence has been a partial shut down, strikes, internal disorder in the whole HMT complex. There can be no doubt of the good organization and management of HMT. It cannot be said that there is any flaw in its production or its personnel as a whole.

Thus we arrive at the vital point of sales or offtake or disposal, by whatever name we wish to describe it. To solve it we have to refer back to the early Avadi resolution and be clear : do we want a socialist pattern? Do we want to try to provide sufficiency for our society, that is to say, do we want to give a fair deal to all our citizens and do we want them to earn a wage which will ensure an adequate standard of living ?

If we answer all these in the affirmative, then why have our leaders and our representatives never asked publicly : (a) How much industrial output is needed; (b) what for; and (c) by when. All one hears is the perpetual whine of why hasn't this paid dividends and where is the money invested. When Sri Charan Singh

made the staggering observation that out of a revenue of Rs 178 crores, Rs 123 crores goes to salaries and the functions of governing, the responding public stoicism was a clear indication that the essence of this had not sunk into the public head or heart. We are quite resigned to this state of things; we accept it.

British Days Continue

What does this mean? It means that two-thirds of the revenue of UP goes uninvested never to show any return. Only one-third is left and how much of this is invested in productive activity is hard to say. It will be certainly less than half. Of that half, only a fraction finds its way to the hands of agriculturists or factory men. Thus what has been happening over the years, in British days, continues to happen today. The country is being gradually impoverished and any economic base of a non-agricultural nature is being shared by the few. A good deal of money is flowing out, and, in order to meet this growing deficit, more private industry is being set up piecemeal and the public sector also set to close the gap. But this closing can never happen; only the public sector will gradually become a captive industry to exports. Having once been captivated for exports the public sector ceases to socialize on the one hand, gets drawn into the vortex of recessions, and no demands on the other; and due to recession if there is lack of available money, planning, growth, employment all go to the wall. The quickest solution to such a catastrophe is to create more offices and fill them with more employees to keep more people thinking less and less. The number of rickshaws licensed will also increase.

Here it may not be out of place to draw a gloomy, even an ominous comparison; comparison with China, which was torn with civil war till 1949 and has since been torn by all kinds of schisms and isms. Technically China was far behind India, was and has been far more disturbed and has had far less access to the world than we have. Except in Manchuria they had no iron and steel industry; no cement industry, no dams and scarcely any electricity worth speaking of. Their roads and rail communications were confined to the coastal regions.

Today China has made for itself several complexes the size of Heavy Engineering Corporation. It has been making trucks and aircraft. Has built many more miles of canals, roads and railroads; but most important of all, China is producing between 30 and 40 million tons of iron and steel.

When Sri C. Subramaniam was Minister of Heavy Industry (in 1963) we had a meeting in which his Secretary said that India's steel target for the Third Plan was 18 million tons. This would not be reached, nevertheless we had to plan for 30 million tons in the Fourth Plan. The same Ministry would now cut a sorry figure if it had to tell the country the truth. That is to say, India is not even producing 8 million tons. They are instead talking of flexibility and producing what is "needed". Thus the specific purposes for which the heavy industries (that is to say, the industrial capital goods creating industries) were set up is being quietly diverted and changed.

We shall still see GNP and monetary rate of growth figures being produced and maybe the rate of growth may go on at 3, 4, or even 6 percent, but

that growth is only growth in actual earnings from production and includes largely inessential goods. A large percentage of it will also represent growth of wealth drained out of India. It will have no relationship to India building an industrial base. Indeed, it seems difficult to see us moving into the next century except in fetters, to export raw materials to the world of progress.

The seriousness of this implication is just this:

- (1) That the technical growth of India will be dwarfed. By any standard the number of engineers and technicians is small, yet we are slashing back on their further production.
- (2) The pressure on the land will become greater and greater; for with increased production per acre there will be at least enough to eat for some. So, food scarcity in towns and cities will grow in proportion.
- (3) The comparative gap between us and progressing countries will grow, and with it our independence in thought and action will diminish.

Already the signs of disaster are visible. Not only is UP paying Rs 123 crores to its unproductive employees but there are six and half million administrative staff employed all over India, in Central and State service, and Rs. 186 crores constitutes the pay of the former for this year, rising by over Rs 50 crores.

The Defence budget of Rs 1015 crores also means payment for protection but not for production. In fact, an alarming portion of this defence budget is for imports. Even production in ordnance factories is within an enclosed economy and inhibits rather than expands the industrial base by drawing off labour and material into its closed doors. Here a great effort has also succeeded in contracting out to private producers, much defence production, since after the fall of Krishna Menon. Here lies the embryo of our future Du Ponts, Mausers, Oerlikons with a permanent interest in externally strained relations and the internationalization of illicit sales of war materials.

Gloomy Picture

This then is the gloomy picture which faces a people who have elected and re-elected a government that has constantly mouthed socialism and supported rapid growth of the private sector; being in fact tied to the purse-strings of large private owners of capital, who in turn, are tied to the aid of foreign firms. How the country can break out of this grip is the million dollar question on which hangs our future; but it would not be right to leave our thinking on this note; for the achievement of a socialist pattern has already been successfully demonstrated elsewhere.

The planning of a socialist pattern undoubtedly depends on planning the growth of electrification on the industrial and agricultural fronts. It depends on industry and agriculture being supplementary to each other and not isolated. This means the peasant being free of fear of technology. It will therefore mean a very solid infra-structure of basic and heavy industries, a wide and intensive concentration on education of a high standard—a forward-looking and not a backward-harking educational system.

Serious planning and financing in such a society is to use all the means available in the short term and to

(Continued on Page 38)

To Fight Communalism

SUBHADRA JOSHI

THE pride that the Congress and Congressmen take for having led the country to freedom is quite legitimate. The unstinted respect and response that the people of India have given to the organisation during the last two decades is an ample proof of this. The reasons for this are not far to seek although I feel that the younger generation of Congressmen must not forget them if they seek to maintain the dignity and prestige of this great organisation handed down to us by Gandhiji and Panditji.

The main achievements of the Congress were

- (a) forging the unity of the entire people; and
- (b) leading a non-violent struggle to success against foreign rule.

The Congress was able to do it because under Gandhiji's leadership it had learnt to fight against injustice without caring for any petty short-term gains. Congressmen went forward to sacrifice their lives for the preservation of the ideals of Congress.

Responsibility of Congressmen

I am concerned more about the role of our organisation in forging unity between various religious communities. Gandhiji had told us that if the Hindus and the Muslims continued to fly at each others' throat any third power could take away India's freedom. Therefore, our fight for freedom had become synonymous with our fight against Communalism. That was the sense in which Gandhiji had said that there would be no Swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity.

It was this understanding that made Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi lay down his life. Gandhiji underwent numerous fasts only to purge the nation of the communal poison. Ultimately he became a martyr in the cause.

Congressmen know all this. I have tried to stir these memories because I have a painful feeling that there has grown a tendency to overlook the urgency and importance of carrying on incessant struggle against communal forces. The communal disturbances that take place from time to time are

a proof that the poison that Gandhiji sought to purge has not entirely gone out of our body-politic. On the other hand, it is becoming more organised, more aggressive and more menacing. The confident tone in which the RSS and its political wing, the Jana Sangh, has started asserting their communalist ideology, is a measure of the damage done. Today they have the audacity to openly sow suspicion against the minorities, particularly the Muslims and the Christians. They do not feel ashamed of the anti-Muslim riots in which they have both ideological and organisational role. They openly call upon the Muslims to either give up their cultural distinctions or to accept an inferior status under their 'protective wings.'

Nervousness Among Muslims

In such a situation it is not surprising if the Muslims in India have developed a sense of nervous insecurity. The anti-Muslim communalists are aggressive and assertive while the secularists are complacent or apologetic. The minorities had the highest hopes with the Congress which had over the decades evolved a distinctive Indian concept of secularism. It was neither in conflict with any religious belief nor had a negative attitude towards religion. It asserted the positive and allowed democratic right to every citizen to pursue or propagate any religious faith. The realisation of this ideal necessitated that those who seek to breed hatred and divisions in the name of religion are stopped from doing so. No concept of democracy allows the assertion of majority view to the total exclusion of the minority. Far less the Congress view of democracy which seeks to evolve a synthesis of the good points of all.

The sense of disappointment that the minority community expresses with the Congress is only a measure of its hopes and expectations. The Congress can regain its confidence and support if it once again asserts its true spirit.

The controversy whether the Government or the organisation is responsible for the present state of affairs is futile. The Congress Government cannot be conceived or understood in exclusion of the party.

There have been faults of omission and commission by the Government.

The first thing the Congress should have done after taking over the administration was to introduce

This note was circulated by the author to the members of the All-India Congress Committee during its session in New Delhi in June 2-4, 1968. In a speech at the AICC she demanded the banning of RSS.

into the education system elements that could have created a non-communal and secular atmosphere. This has not been done. The study of history continues to be of the same sort as it was during the rule of the British, who tried definitely to introduce communal overtones into historical developments. Textbooks sometimes betray a backward obscurantist communalist attitude. There should have been a serious appraisal of the whole system from the point of view of promoting secular values but that has not been done. As a result, two decades after independence the nation has not mentally advanced in the direction of secularism.

In the services, the proportion of minorities, particularly of Muslims, has been declining. Maybe, the intention was not communal. Maybe, the backwardness of the Muslims came in the way; but a situation in which a particular community becomes conspicuous by its absence in the country's administration should not have been allowed to continue.

Special efforts should have been made to remove the fears and inefficiency of the minority community and to introduce trends and forces which should have brought it into the mainstream of national life, social, economic and political.

The most glaring failure of the Government has been in keeping vigilance against communal organisations and communal propaganda. The RSS, for example, has been having its activity unhindered and unmitigated during these two decades. What they teach and what they preach to the common man, is not known to the Government. Their leaders and newspapers spit communal poison day in and day out. It is now said that the existing laws are not adequate to deal with this problem. This realisation has come rather too late. During the period, serious damage has been done not only to life and property but also to the mental and moral fibre of the nation.

The attitude of the Government on many occasions has not only been soft but one of appeasement. It has been noticed with regret by not only Congressmen but all patriotic Indians that at times when the Government should have been firm against the slogans and demands of the communalists, it has shown signs of knuckling under.

Cannot Sit Quiet

The faults of the Government and the administration must be removed. But pointing that out is not enough. With its glorious tradition of struggle against all injustice the Congress cannot show helplessness if the Government does not do something. It must create public opinion which should force the hands of the Government to take necessary action.

It is here that we as an organisation have failed. As a party it is our responsibility that we make the values of secularism prevail. It is not enough to say that change in the economic circumstances, scientific and technological development would by itself eliminate communalism. Experience in the past particularly about incidence in scientific and educational institutions and establishments, shows that conscious efforts to assert secularism are neces-

sary.

The Congress party as the largest party in the country has the primary responsibility to educate public opinion in this direction. What the other parties do, should be no excuse for inaction. In fact, it should be possible for the Congress to give a lead to other parties also in making the secular ideal a reality of Indian political life.

The Congress should bring before the people the need of the value of secularism. For this purpose, it should organise seminars and study schools where intensive education is imparted to workers for eradicating communal ideas from the people. It has been a major fault with our organisation that we have not taken concrete steps to make the ideals of our national movement a living reality for the successive generations of the Indian people. It is not enough to make casual references to the heroic struggle in election speeches. The turn to the history given by the freedom movement and the new values generated during it, must be brought before the people through various media like lectures, exhibitions, pamphlets and books. It must be admitted that we have failed as an organisation very badly in this direction.

The Congress at every level should have vigilance committees to keep a watch so that the communal mischief-mongers are not able to pollute the atmosphere and create incidents that put the nation to shame. There should have been even anti-communalist squads in places where there is likelihood of tension and trouble.

In the organisation, we should also see to it that due place is given to members of the minority community. Special effort should be made to develop contact with the Muslim masses and give them a new orientation. This is true not only of the Muslim masses but of all sections. Just enrolling them as members is not enough. They should be given the consciousness that becoming members of the Congress means the development of a new outlook.

Besides giving due representation, the Congress should try to bring together the various communities in social life so that distance is bridged and goodwill increases.

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Food Policy and its Administration in Bihar

S. P. SINHA

BIHAR has predominantly an agricultural economy. Ninety percent of its population depends upon agriculture for its livelihood. It produces nine percent of the total production of food-grains in India and occupies the third position among Indian States with regard to production of food-grains. Cereals and pulses each contribute nine percent of the total output in the country. Main cereal crops of the State are rice, maize, and wheat. Bihar produces 14 percent of rice, 20 percent of maize and four percent of wheat produced in all the States combined.

Bihar produces three rice crops namely autumn, winter and summer rice. Winter rice is the most important and accounts for roughly 95 percent of the total rice produced in the State. Similarly, out of the summer maize and the autumn maize, the latter accounts for 95 percent of the total production of maize in Bihar. On the whole, rice accounts for 71 percent, maize 14 percent and others 7 percent of the total cereal produced in the State. Unfavourable weather conditions, frequent floods and draughts during the last three years have, however, resulted in creating strains on production making the entire supply of cereals unstable.

The third five year plan proposed to raise the yield of food-grains from 60.96 lakh tonnes in (1960-61) to 81.55 lakh tonnes in (1965-66). By 1963-64, the production of food-grains reached 74.02 lakh tonnes. In 1964-65,

it was 74.12 lakh tonnes and the shortfall in targeted production was due to the fall in the production of maize, rice and other millets. Reference has not been made to the shortfalls in production in the years 1965-66 as it was an abnormal year with famine conditions prevailing throughout the State. It appears that Bihar had a deficit in food-grains to the tune of 8,36,000 tonnes, of which, cereals accounted for 6,90,000 and pulses for 1,46,000 tonnes. Specially in rice, the deficit was estimated at 5,52,000 tonnes. With respect to wheat, maize, gram and pulses, and other cereals, the deficit was 82, 11, 56, 90 and 45 thousand tonnes respectively. The deficit was met by imports. On an average 516 thousand tonnes of cereals and 42 thousand tonnes of pulses were imported every year. Most of the rice imports come from Nepal, while wheat and gram are imported from Punjab, Rajasthan, Western UP and Madhya Pradesh. Thus the overall position of food production and food supply require regulation of the food trade, correction of the distributive channels, price-support measures and the building up of a buffer stock in order to meet the requirements in times of deficit.

In short, the food policy of the state should be such as to initiate a measure of self-sufficiency and provide incentives for the farmers to produce more. The policy of the Government of Bihar in this respect has not been very encouraging. A review of the food policy since 1963 would make the point clear.

In 1963, the Bihar Food-grains

Dealers licensing order, made it necessary for all traders engaged in purchase, sale or storage of food-grains (10 Quintals or more) to obtain licenses for the purpose. Bihar forms a part of the rice zone since last five years; for wheat, it is a separate zone in itself. On November 28, 1964 an order was passed banning export of coarse grains from Bihar making it a zone in itself so far as food-grains are concerned. Price support measures were adopted by fixing the prices of coarse, medium and fine paddy at Rs 35.00, Rs 37.50 and Rs 40.25 per quintal respectively. This scheme was extended to coarse paddy with effect from December 1, 1965 and to medium and fine paddy from January 19, 1966.

The most important and the most controversial aspect of the food policy has been the Bihar rice procurement (Levy) order, 1964 brought into effect from December 15, 1964. Under this order the wholesalers and millers were required to pay 25 percent levy on rice milled or acquired by them on the ex-mill prices fixed under the Bihar Paddy and Rice (Price Control) order, 1964. Later, the levy was enhanced to 50 percent with effect from December 18, 1964. The levy was withdrawn from hand pounded rice with effect from December 31, 1964. Thus, the levy was actually a 50 percent levy on milled rice only and was to be realised from the owner of the mill or huller plants by the Government agency. Voluntary procurement campaign was launched by the Government of Bihar from February 9, 1965 through the agencies of Panchayat

The author is Reader in Economics, C.M. College, Darbhanga, Bihar.

Parishads and the Gram Panchayats, to persuade the big cultivators to make voluntary offers of paddy and rice on the basis of land under rice cultivation. The cultivators were required to part with one maund of paddy or 26 seers of rice per acre of rice harvested by them. The prices payable to the cultivators were the ex-mill rates fixed under the Bihar Paddy and Rice (Price control) Order, 1964 minus Rupees two, deducted as the price of the bag. The Panchayat Parishads and the Gram Panchayats were to get commission for their services at the rate of 25 P per maund of paddy and 40 P per maund of rice procured and stored in the local Panchayat or Government Godowns. Thus levy and voluntary procurement schemes were supposed to build the buffer stock. In a sense, the scheme tried to make the state self-sufficient as far as the food supply was concerned.

Stocks Withheld

However, the scheme did not succeed. On the one hand, the scheme failed to induce farmers, specially big producers in the State to release their stock for procurement. Big producers were reported to be withholding stocks in anticipation of substantial rise in the prices during the lean months. On the other hand on account of meagre commission given to agents, the agents were reluctant to operate in the interior areas and hence, the response was not satisfactory. The total amount of rice and paddy procured under the scheme hardly came to two percent of the marketable surplus of rice available in Bihar. By mid-April, 1965 only a small quantity of 30,000 tonnes of rice was purchased as against a target of two lakh tonnes.

The withdrawal of levy on hand pounded rice from December 31, 1964, encouraged the producers to convert paddy into rice manually, rather than, offer it for sale at a lower rate to the millers. Wholesalers offered higher rates in comparison to the price of paddy paid by the millers. The State Government, therefore, directed the District Officers to

fix quota from hullers for the period between December 15, 1964 and June 30, 1965 on the basis of their average production in the corresponding period of the last three years. The effect was disastrous. Wherever the District Officers tried to enforce this order, the hullers stopped working and on refusal their plants were sealed. In a way, harassment by officials in a bid to purchase larger quantities, the dearth of technical personnel for verification and classification of stocks, lack of finance and shortage of storage capacity and frequent changes made in the policy all resulted in the failure of the scheme. Further, the difference in price of Rupees five per maund in the open market price of paddy between Bihar and Eastern part of UP encouraged heavy smuggling of paddy from Bihar to UP. Above all, the stoppage of arrival of paddy from Nepal caused a major setback in building up of the buffer stock. Not less than three lakh quintals of paddy and two lakh quintals of rice come from Nepal every year. In the pre-war years, this amount was estimated at 7.5 lakh tonnes. This was the main source, feeding the rice mills on the northern borders of Bihar. The Government of Nepal banned the export of both paddy and rice. Millers in Nepal were encouraged to lift paddy and convert it into rice. They were paid money in advance by the Government of Nepal, which was purchasing rice from millers for barter transactions with Chinese goods. Thus 33 percent of the mills on Nepal border were closed. The rest were running at 25 percent of their capacity. Thus, the prospect of procurement and building up of buffer stock appeared to be very bleak in Bihar.

Efforts Failed

Thus, the first efforts made to build up a buffer stock failed on account of lack of a realistic approach and a proper correlation between the policy of procurement and the support price measures. The policy of procurement failed to provide any incentive to the farmer for increasing his production mostly

because the prices fixed for procurement were generally lower than the market price. Further, the procurement order was not based on any scientific classification of land between different categories according to the soil productivity and the irrigation facilities. Hence marginal adjustments were not made while fixing levy on an acreage basis.

Failure of 14-point Policy

The announcement of a 14 point integrated food policy of the Government of Bihar in 1965 did not cut much ice from the point of view of providing incentives for improving agriculture. The policy came into effect on November 1, 1965 and remained in force till the next Kharif season i.e. October, 1966. The policy included guarantee of minimum price of paddy, continuance of a separate zone for rice and wheat and levy on rice mills having more than one huller. The minimum support price for coarse variety paddy was fixed at Rs 35 per quintal.

The levy order included the following points: A levy on all rice mills having more than one huller at the rate of 12.50 percent of their production. A levy was imposed on all cultivators having more than five acres of land for the procurement of paddy. The five first acres of all other cultivators were to be exempted from the levy. The scale was fixed at 60 kilograms of paddy per acre in Patna, Tirhut and Bhagalpur Divisions (except Santhal parganas) and 40 kilograms per acre in Chotanagpur and Santhal parganas districts. The cultivators were given a choice of selling rice in lieu of paddy. Such cultivators as cultivated paddy in five acres or less only had the choice of selling wheat or gram in lieu of paddy. The purchase prices of paddy and rice were fixed as follows:

Coarse paddy: Rs 4.000 per quintal; medium paddy: Rs 42.50 per quintal; Coarse rice: Rs 68.00 per quintal and medium rice: Rs 72.00 per quintal. Transport charges at the rate of 10 paise per

quintal per mile were to be paid for delivering the paddy levy at the Block (Government) godown. No maximum price was fixed for any food-grain.

On November 27, the Government of Bihar amended its paddy levy order. According to the amendment, class IV and III "Tabir" land in the Chotanagpur and class II and III "Bari" lands in the Santhal pargana region, as also lands recorded as homestead, forest, rocky or over which any building or structure stood or which was incapable of being used for agricultural or horticultural purposes or was used for industrial purposes, were exempted from the paddy levy. As regards the scale of levy, the amendment order included the Adhaura and Nauhatta blocks of Shahabad district in the category, where 40 kilograms per acre were charged as levy.

Maize was also made acceptable in lieu of paddy, wherever offered from the last crop. Further, Government officials were asked to purchase paddy at the price paid for the levy, in excess of the levy amount if the cultivator wished to sell it. However, the amended order did not introduce any radical change or any improvement except providing certain exemptions and alterations in the levy order and its mode of payment.

Levy Scales

The Government of Bihar headed by the United Front made further amendments in the foodgrains procurement programme on November 20, 1967. It was again decided to undertake procurement of foodgrains from producers, the wholesale dealers and the rice-millers including the owners of the single huller rice mills. Cultivators possessing land up to five acres in the irrigated areas or the first ten acres of land in unirrigated areas were exempted from procurement. The following scales were provided. For the plain region, the first five acres of irrigated land and 10 acres of unirrigated lands were exempted. For the irrigated lands exceeding five acres and up to 10 acres, 1½ quintal per acre, and for the unirrigated

lands exceeding 10 acres and up to 15 acres one quintal per acre; for irrigated land exceeding 10 acres and up to 15 acres 2½ quintals per acre; for unirrigated land exceeding 15 acres and up to 20 acres 1½ quintals per acre; and for irrigated lands exceeding 15 acres, three quintals per acre, whereas, for unirrigated lands exceeding 20 acres 1½ quintals per acre were imposed as levy. As regards, the irrigated land of the plateau region, the same scales as applicable for the plain region (irrigated lands) were prescribed. For the unirrigated plateau land, 75 kilograms per acre for land exceeding 10 acres and not exceeding 15 acres; one quintal per acre for lands exceeding 15 acres and not exceeding 20 acres; and 1½ quintal for the lands exceeding 20 acres, were prescribed as levy. If a cultivator had both irrigated and unirrigated land, the irrigated lands were to be converted into unirrigated land by multiplying the former by two and scales prescribed for the latter were to be applied.

Procurement Prices

The State Government fixed following prices for the procurement of paddy and rice. Paddy prices were fixed Rs 56.25 P per quintal, Rs 61.25 P. per quintal and Rs 66.25 P. per quintal for the coarse, medium, fine and superfine varieties respectively. It was decided that, over and above the procurement price of paddy, a bonus of Rs 3.75, per quintal would be paid to cultivators who would deliver the quantity of paddy assessable on them before February 29, 1968 similarly, in case of rice, a higher bonus of Rs 5.75 per quintal was allowed over and above the procurement price of Rs 95.25 P. per quintal on coarse rice, Rs 103.25 P on medium and Rs 111.25 P on fine variety of rice. The bulk of paddy available for procurement in Bihar is that of medium variety, the effective procurement price worked out to be Rs 61.25 plus Rs 3.75 (bonus) that is, Rs 65 per quintal, provided the levy was delivered before February 29th 1968! Along with it transport charges @ 10 paise per quintal per mile and

provision of immediate payment of price on delivery were supposed to induce the farmers to pay their levy. The provisions as prescribed under the Bihar essential Foodgrains procurement order 1967, for procurement of paddy and rice from wholesale dealers and rice-millers were retained. In essence the entire success of the procurement policy is based on cooperation from the producer, wholesaler or miller.

Thus, the United Front Government tried to rationalise the entire procurement scheme by introducing different scales for plain and plateau region, for irrigated and unirrigated land, progressive scales with suitable exemptions and the provision of bonus. But the scheme could not come into operation as the United Front Government was toppled, and the Shoshit Dal ministry suspended the levy and procurement order, with a view to earn the goodwill and the support of the well-to-do farmers in Bihar. However, even the United Front government could not succeed in making the scheme more progressive as the scales were light and the rates fixed were not at all satisfactory. As for instance, for irrigated land exceeding 15 acres and unirrigated land exceeding 20 acres, the rates of levy were three quintals and 1½ quintals per acre respectively. In others, above 15 acres of irrigated and 20 acres of unirrigated land, levy was imposed at a flat rate. It should have been further graduated, and higher rates prescribed on acreages above 15 acres (irrigated) and 20 acres (unirrigated). This scheme, therefore, failed to top the surplus foodgrains available with the well-to-do farmers, possessing large acreages and big sized farms.

Unrealistic Policy

Thus, the new policy of procurement as enunciated in November 1965 and November 1967 were again unsuccessful as they lost sight of certain realities. Firstly, the prices fixed for procurement for the different varieties of paddy were not in conformity with the prices prevailing in the market, after the harvesting was done.

This leads to evasion.

Secondly, the exemption limit of five acres of land as included in November 1965, policy appeared to be too insignificant. Such farms are sub-marginal farms with no marketable surplus. Actually it is only 15 to 20 percent of the farms that have marketable surplus. Further, marketable surplus is evident on farms having 15 to 20 acres, or more of cultivable land. A levy on farms with an acreage of six acres (as mentioned in November 1965) and above created great hardships for the small cultivators who had to depend on grain loans and purchases during the post harvest period for meeting their personal needs and other commitments.

Unjust Rate

Thirdly, the lack of progression in the levy created injustice between the small cultivator and the big cultivator. A levy at a flat rate was not only unjust, it was also injurious. Farm surveys indicated that on big farms that is, farms with an acreage of 50 and above there is a sizeable marketable surplus. A levy with progressive rates and graduated scales would have been more purposeful. The levy order issued by the Government of Bengal proposed a progressive scale and the size of the holdings were classified into different categories and the rates varied from each other. As for instance, above 10 acres, the rates were of 2 quintals per acre in excess of one acre and up to two acres; $3\frac{1}{2}$ quintals for the next one acre; $4\frac{1}{2}$ quintals per acre for the next two acres; six quintals per acre for the next two acres; $7\frac{1}{2}$ quintals per acre for the next three acres and eight quintals per acre for the remaining acres. Similar scales or even with greater progression above 15 acres of irrigated and 20 acres of unirrigated land should have been adopted in Bihar for the different land holdings.

Fourthly, great difficulty is experienced in collecting grain in very small amounts from a large number of farmers spread over a

wide region. Lastly, the arrangements regarding godowns in the rural areas are not satisfactory. Gram panchayats have not yet built grain godowns. Cultivators have to face difficulties in transporting grains from remote areas and that too in small amounts.

Above all, there is a growing feeling that the per acre productivity is higher on small farms as compared to the big farms. Small farms are mostly owned by the backward classes in Bihar, who are genuinely interested in cultivation and in improving agricultural productivity. Large holdings belong to other castes, namely Rajputs and Bhumihars, who are well-to-do and who are also engaged in other professions, trades and services along with the cultivation of agricultural lands.

Thus, this class is not particularly interested in improving agricultural practices. Their income from land is mostly a surplus income. In short, the present levy on small units and at a flat rate on all holdings above a certain limit discourages small farmers to increase their production. On the other hand the big farmers are scarcely touched. Thus, the present policy also fails to evolve rational approach to the policy of food and procurement. Thus, in the present context, it may not be wrong to make a few suggestions to make the procurement schemes more practical and workable.

Workable Suggestions

The first 10 acres should be exempted from levy, while a slab system should operate in respect of the remaining area possessed by cultivator. Graduated rates should be imposed on big farmers. Wherever wages are paid in kind, allowance should be made for such payments.

Secondly, cooperative marketing societies should be organised and authorised to collect the surplus and transport it to the Government godowns. Thirdly, Government should examine the possibility and the practicability of substituting the cash payment of land revenue (suspended by

the United Front ministry) by payment through grains. Even if a graded land tax (as proposed by the United Front ministry) is imposed, grain equivalents of such a tax may be fixed. The entire land tax may be expressed as a percent of the land productivity depending upon the soil conditions and the irrigational facilities. This will ensure security in the community and encourage food production as well.

Courage Lacking

Above all, the system of monopoly purchase of food-grains by the Government needs immediate introduction. For, unless compulsory levy is combined with monopoly purchase, the levy system is bound to fail because, the grain dealers and rice mill owners, are likely to outbid the Government in the open market. The United Front ministry in its recent announcements included the policy of monopoly purchase and prescribed exemptions from levy on small farms. Yet, courage and conviction, as well as firm determination has been lacking in implementing this policy in face of strong opposition from the well-to-do farmers, vested interests and the mill-owners who combined together in getting the implementation delayed or in obtaining concessions that would reduce the policy to complete ineffectiveness. Actually this happened when the Shoshit Dal ministry came to power. They suspended levy imposed on farmers and did not show much eagerness in collecting it from wholesalers and millers.

Thus, there is need for boldness and progressive steps to make the policy of levy and procurement dynamic and realistic, in order that it may ultimately lead to the creation of a sizeable buffer stock in the State.

Thus what is required today is, progressive and bold measures which would make the policy of levy and procurement both dynamic and realistic if a sizeable buffer stock has to be created in the state.

Haryana: Change and Perspective

VED K. GUPTA

UNPRINCIPLED defections in either direction by virtue of their frequency precluded the possibility of a stable Ministry in Haryana and placed the Governor in doubt "whether the will of the majority in the legislature does really represent the will of the people". Basing himself on this ground, the Governor recommended mid-term election, hoping that it would impart not only legitimacy to political authority but would also ensure the much desired stability by bringing about a change in the character and the composition of the legislators. The extent of the broad political changes emerging from the mid-term election could be perceived with the help of statistics but any meaningful attempt involving the evaluation of the prospects of stability would not be possible without keeping the socio-economic milieu in view, particularly in a state like Haryana.

In the absence of certain commonly agreed ideals, plurality by giving rise to casteism, factionalism, linguism and regionalism has become the breeding ground of bitter conflicts. In these conflicts lie the root of political instability which becomes manifest only when they are taken up by the political parties competing unscrupulously with each other for 'political power' for its own sake. This is particularly true of Haryana.

When Haryana came into existence on November 1, 1966, just a few months before the Fourth General Election, as a result of

the linguistic reorganization of Punjab, Sri Bhagwat Dayal Sharma became its Chief Minister. Under his stewardship, the Congress obtained majority in the Legislature in the 1967 General Election, and formed the Ministry which left unsatisfied the quest for power of the dissidents as against the ministerialists. This along with the historical rivalry between agriculturist and non-agriculturist classes, communal jealousies and personal animosities led to large-scale defections, fall of the Congress Ministry and the consequent installation of the United Front Ministry headed by Rao Birender Singh.

This change opened the prospects of acquiring power by bringing about a marginal shift in the political loyalties. On the one hand, it accentuated the scramble for power and left nothing with which to check the persons representing the conflicting interests, out to aggrandise their personal gains, and on the other it rendered extremely difficult to reconcile the diverse and conflicting interests represented by the various components of the United Front ministry. The narration of the factors leading to acute political instability in Haryana would remain incomplete, without mentioning also the absence of a responsible Opposition in the State Assembly.

It is against this background that the study of the political change is to be undertaken in terms of the number of candidates sponsored, the votes polled, the number of seats secured (retained, gained and lost) and the performance of the former MLAs.

In addition to the political parties that participated in the General Election, there were two new parties this time, the Vishal Haryana Party (VHP) and the Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD) which placed 29 and 6 candidates in the field respectively. Despite this, the number of candidates put up by the various parties, besides the Independent candidates registered a decline from 471 in 1967 to 399 in 1968; this was because the four Leftist parties together put up only 15 candidates this time as against 46 in 1967, and the number of the Independent candidates seeking election fell from 260 to 180. Also, the average number of candidates contesting declined as is indicated by the fact that 70 per cent of the seats were contested by 5 or less than 5 candidates as compared to 51.8 percent in 1967 (see Table I).

In selecting their candidates the parties were not unmindful of the caste and the community of the candidate as well as of the electors. Besides, the Jan Sangh did not select defectors as its candidates and the Congress went a step further by excluding even the factionist leaders from its list.

In the pre-election polemics, the fiscal policy, the prices of the agricultural commodities and the related issues appeared on the periphery, as the central position was occupied by stability. The Congress claimed itself to be the sole custodian of stability and its top leaders urged the voters to reject the defectors. This was countered by the United Front led by the VHP with the vote-catching slogan of 'Vishal Haryana,' and by the Sangh-Swatantra alliance by the promise of a

A preliminary analysis of Haryana election result was made by Saral Patra in Mainstream (May 25, 1968)

TABLE 1

Change in the contests according to No. of Candidates

No. of seats contested by	2 Candidates	3 Candidates	4 Candidates	5 Candidates	6 Candidates	7 Candidates	8 Candidates	9 Candidates	10 Candidates	11 Candidates	12 or more Candidates	Total No. of Seats
General Election	1	7	18	16	14	8	8	3	3	1	2	81
Mid-term Poll	4	14	23	15	10	7	4	3	1	Nil	Nil	81

TABLE 2

Change in the No. of Electors, votes Polled & Invalid votes.

	Number of Electors	Number of Votes polled & % of total. Electors	Number of Invalid Votes & % Votes Polled
General Election	4,387,390	3,187,946 72.56	1,58,014 4.96
Mid-term poll	4,551,797	2,603,909 57.26	63,896 2.43

fair deal to the traders as well as the rich farmers.

There was an increase in the number of voters from 43.87 lakhs in 1967 to 45.51 lakhs in 1968, but the marriage season coupled with rich harvest prevented a larger turn-out and only 57.26 percent of the votes were polled this time as against 72.56 percent in 1967. At the same time, the number of invalid votes and percent of invalid votes to total votes polled declined from 4.96 percent to 2.43 percent which indicates the educative value of frequent elections. (See Table 2)

The Congress increased its votes from 41.33 per cent in the General Election to 43.88 per cent in the mid-term election. The increase of the Congress votes in the districts of Ambala, Rohtak and Gurgaon more than offset the decrease in Karnal, Hissar, Jind and Mahendergarh. The VHP collected in its bag a sizeable chunk of 14.08 percent of votes mainly from the Mahendergarh—Gurgaon region, as against the Jan Sangh which secured only 10.46 percent votes

in the mid-term election (14.39 percent in 1967), the Swatantra increased its votes to 8.13 percent (3.18 percent in 1967). While the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra together polled 17.57 per cent in the General Election, they increased it to 18.59 per cent this time. Votes polled by the Leftist Parties (CPI, CPI (M), SSP & PSP) and the Independents dwindled from 5.22 percent to 1.47 per cent, and from 32.97 percent to 19.67 percent respectively. (see Tables 3 and 4)

It would be interesting to note the number of seats captured by these parties. The Congress captured 48 seats (59.25 percent of the contested seats), the VHP 13 seats (44.8 percent of the contested seats), the Jan Sangh 7 seats (16.27 percent of the contested seats), the Swatantra 2 seats (6.25 percent of the contested seats), the RPI 1 seat (7.67 percent of the contested seats), the BKD 1 seat (16.66 percent of the contested seats) and the Independents 9 seats (12.3 percent of the contested seats). Whereas the Congress share of the Assembly seats

has remained same, the number of seats captured by all other parties that had participated in the General Election as well has dwindled.

Table 5 indicates that the Congress in the mid-term election could retain 26 out of 48 Assembly seats it had won in the General Election, the Jan Sangh 3 out of 12 and no other party could retain any 4 its former seats. The Congress lost 22 seats and gained an equal number, the Jan Sangh lost 9 and gained 4, the Swatantra lost 3 and gained 2, the RPI lost 2 and gained 1 and the Independents lost all the 16 seats they had in the last Assembly and gained 9 new seats. It may be mentioned that some of the Independent MLAs have been re-elected from the same seats on the VHP ticket this time (Major Amir Singh, Dalip Singh and Hari Singh from Badhra, Kanina and Mahendergarh respectively.)

In this process of the transfer of seats, the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra ended up without any seat in four and five districts respectively. The RPI and the Independents lost their seats completely in two more districts. Whereas the VHP captured seats in five of seven districts varying from one to five, the BKD secured its only in one district. The Congress alone secured seats in all the districts and fairly uniformly.

It is here that the performance of the former MLAs¹ need to be viewed. For the purpose of this study they have been divided into four groups :

(1) 31 MLAs sought re-election from the same constituencies with the same party-label. 17 (45.16 percent) of them have been elected;

(2) All the 4 Congress MLAs who changed their constituency in the mid-term election have been elected 100.00 percent;

(3) 17 MLAs changed their party-label² without changing their constituency. 7 of them have been elected 41.17 percent;

1. This means the members of the dissolved Assembly only.

2. This also includes those Independents who have contested mid-term election on the Congress or the VHP or the Swatantra ticket.

TABLE 3
Change in Party-wise position of winning candidates

District	No. of Constituencies	No. of Contestants		INC		VHP		BJS		Swatantra		RPI		BKD		Independents	
		1967	68	67	68	67	68	67	68	67	68	67	68	67	68	67	68
1. Ambala	9	43	57	5	7	—	Nil	2	2	Nil	Nil	1	Nil	—	Nil	1	Nil
2. Karnal	16	86	78	10	9	—	Nil	4	2	1	Nil	1	—	Nil	—	1	4
3. Jind	5	28	21	3	3	—	1	Nil	Nil	1	1	1	Nil	—	Nil	Nil	Nil
4. Rohtak	15	102	71	9	9	—	2	2	3	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	—	Nil	4	1
5. Gurgaon	13	67	60	5	7	—	5	1	Nil	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	—	Nil	6	1
6. Hissar	17	112	82	14	11	—	1	2	Nil	Nil	1	Nil	Nil	—	1	1	3
7. Mahender-Garh	6	33	30	2	2	—	4	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	—	Nil	3	Nil
Total	81	471	399	48	48	—	13	12	7	3	2	2	1	—	1	16	9

Note : No winning candidates belong to PSP, SSP, CPI & CPI (M).

TABLE 4
Change in Party-wise position of Candidates Sponsored, Elected, Lost Security & Votes Polled.

Parties	No. of Candidates Sponsored		No. of Candidates Elected		No. of Candidates Losing deposits		Votes Polled		% of Votes	
	1967	1968	I	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
1. INC	81	81	48	48	Nil	Nil	1252,290	1,114,074	41.38	43.83
2. VHP	—	29	—	13	—	7	—	456,983	—	14.08
3. BJS	48	43	12	7	21	27	436,145	265,739	14.39	10.46
4. Swatantra	12	32	3	2	7	5	96,410	207,843	3.18	8.13
5. RPI	24	13	2	1	20	8	87,861	21,613	2.90	0.85
6. BKD	—	6	Nil	1	—	5	—	37,005	—	1.46
7. CPI	12	3	Nil	Nil	12	3	27,238	8,210	0.90	0.32
8. CPI (M)	8	2	Nil	Nil	8	2	16,378	3,632	0.54	0.14
9. SSP	23	8	Nil	Nil	17	5	108,172	23,936	3.57	0.94
10. PSP	3	2	Nil	Nil	3	2	6,447	1,801	0.21	0.07
11. Independents	260	180	16	9	196	148	998,969	500,018	32.97	19.67
Total	471	399	81	81	284	212	3,029,941	2,540,854	100.00	100.00

TABLE 5
Sources of Seats Gained & Lost by the Parties—1968

Parties	INC	VHP	BJS	Swatantra	BKD	RPI	Independents	Seats Gained
INC	*26	Nil	7	2	Nil	2	11	22
VHP	7	*Nil	Nil	1	Nil	Nil	5	13
BJS	4	Nil	*3	—	Nil	Nil	Nil	4
Swatantra	2	Nil	Nil	*Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	2
BKD	1	Nil	Nil	—	*Nil	Nil	Nil	1
RPI	1	Nil	Nil	—	Nil	*Nil	Nil	1
Independent	7	Nil	2	—	Nil	Nil	*Nil	9
Seats Lost	22	Nil	9	3	Nil	2	16	52

These figures represent seats retained by parties from among those won by them in the General Elections.

TABLE 6
Performance of the sitting MLAs in the mid-term Election

	No. of MLAs contesting	No. of MLAs Elected	No. of MLAs defeated	% of elected to total	% of defeated to total
1. From the same constituency on the same ticket	31	14	17	45.16	54.84
2. From different constituency on the same ticket	4	4	Nil	100.00	Nil
3. From the same constituency on different ticket	17	7	10	41.17	58.83
4. From different constituency on different ticket	9	3	6	33.33	66.67

TABLE 7
Party-wise Composition of MLAs

Party	No. of MLAs	No. of New MLAs & % of total MLAs	No. of old MLAs & % of total MLAs
INC	48	31 (38.75)	17 (21.25)
VHP	12	6 (7.50)	6 (7.50)
BJS	7	5 (6.25)	2 (2.50)
Swatantra	2	2 (2.50)	Nil
BKD	1	1 (1.25)	Nil
RPI	1	1 (1.25)	Nil
Independent	9	7 (8.75)	2 (2.50)
Total	80	53 (66.25)	23 (33.75)

Mr Birender Singh has been elected from two seats.

¶ (4) Only 3 out of 9 MLAs who changed their constituency as well as the party label have been elected (33.33 percent).

Third and Fourth group comprise the so called 'defectors'. On an average 37.69 percent of the defectors have been re-elected as compared to 51.4 percent of the MLAs successful this time, who had not changed their loyalties. Comparatively this would not appear discreditable if it is kept in mind that the defectors which were put up by the VHP fared far better than those who contested as Independents or with Swatantra label. As many as 53 members of the present Assembly (66.25 percent of the total

3. The term defector is used here slightly differently. For instance, Shreyo Nath would not appear to be a defector in this sense because he contested as an Independent in the General Election as well as in the mid-term election.

strength) are new to that forum and at least 17 of them happened to have been defeated in the General Election. (See Table 7)

The verdict of the people has favoured 'change'. Not less than 21 Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Ministers of State of the Congress and the United Front Ministry have faced defeat at the polls. Most of the winners of 1967 have become losers in 1968 and many losers of 1967 have been declared winners in 1968. Many of the constituencies have changed hands and some of the parties have been wiped out from as many as four or five districts. While this wind of change has humbled the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra, it has only added to the self-complacency and self-satisfaction of the Congress by confirming the predominance of one party in the Assembly, which has been claimed as a vindication

of the stand of the Congress High Command of not choosing defectors and factionalists as candidates and an affirmation of the faith of the people of Haryana in the capacity of the Congress to provide a stable government.

In assessing the situation however, we have to take into account some significant developments. Firstly, Table No. 6 and 7, when taken together, leave no doubt about the fact that all the defectors have not been rejected. Secondly, the scant regard which the Congress has shown for its proclaimed programme of radicalism, not to speak of establishing the Socialistic pattern of society, comes out hardly any better than the disregard of the defectors for any programme whatsoever, and their floor crossing for gaining power for personal ends. As such it would not be entirely incorrect to say that the whole party has defected from its programme. Lastly, it is wrong to say that the 'self-seekers' have been left out in the cold as they have been very much accommodated in the organizational wing of the Congress and their quest for power has been met to a significant extent by shifting the venue of power from the Secretariat building in Chandigarh to the AICC office in New Delhi, as is clear from the manner in which the question of the leadership has been settled.

In the wake of the mid-term election, with the new leadership heading the absolute majority of the Congress along with the changed composition of the Legislators, it may be plausible to argue that there are imminent threats to stability. Yet, the fact remains that only few persons have been removed but the forces which led to instability have remained. The mid-term election has confirmed that power would be sought and readily given in the name of stability but as it is not likely to be used for combating the very forces that lead to instability (factionalism, casteism, linguism and regionalism), the quest for stability would remain unsatisfied despite the changes, ushered in by the mid-term election.

Two Aspects of Bonn-Pretoria Alliance

RAMESH JAURA

"A South African firm's scheme to ship the frozen corpses of destitute Africans to West Germany for medical research foundered because West German medical institutes demanded 'white corpses' only. A Johannesburg shipping firm thought up the scheme to export the frozen and preserved corpses of Africans. Several research centres were interested—until they discovered that most of the paupers who died in South Africa were Africans.

"We couldn't help them with white bodies from South Africa, so we have given up the idea", their managing director stated." (*Sechaba*, Vol. 2, No. 4, April 1968).

This newsitem in the official organ of the African National Congress of South Africa, is revealing in more than one way. It brings out two outstanding points, which are of relevance to this discussion: (a) the collusion between South Africa and West Germany which in fact extend beyond the field of medical research; and (b) the extreme poverty of the Africans in South Africa.

The Bonn-Pretoria alliance is much more deep-rooted and wideranging than the quotation above brings out. The two countries jointly — produce and test important military raw materials, atomic weapons, rockets and poisonous gases. This inhuman cooperation between South Africa and West Germany is prompted by the identity of interests both at the economic and political level. The West German rulers find in the economic and trade sanctions against South Africa and Rhodesia, an opportunity to expand their economic interests. The apartheid South African regime, on the other hand, welcomes all

advances by countries interested in aiding.

"Bonn's monopoly capital investment in South Africa, conservatively estimated, is many times bigger than the highest official figure of 600 million marks; it amounts to at least twice that figure and is probably more than that", according to a memorandum of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee of the GDR. A leading West German paper, *Industriekurier* (February 12, 1966) placed Bonn's capital share in South Africa at three per cent, as against England's biggest 61 per cent, the USA's 11 per cent, French 6 per cent, Swiss 4 4 per cent.

The small West German capital investment was ascribed to the fact that the Federal Republic had "only very recently commenced large-scale export of capital to South Africa". Three per cent of West German capital in South Africa thus works out to 600 million marks, the total foreign investments being at 20,000 million marks. West German officials, however, have contradicted the figures and placed them variously between 85 million marks and 330 million marks. And, the unreliability of official figures was indicated by West German Government Counsellor Rolf Howald in an article in *Industriekurier* in its special issue on "South Africa" (March 22, 1966).

He said: "The actual German investments are certainly much bigger". Howald's view was based on the trade balance between West Germany and South Africa.

It is not without significance that in the past five years the trade between West Germany and South Africa has more than doubled.

It had reached the value of 478.4 million marks in 1964 and further went up to 595.3 million marks in 1965. In the next year, however, Bonn's exports to South Africa declined by 4 per cent because of certain import restrictions placed by the latter. But compared with the overall decrease of 15.5 per cent in total imports into South Africa that year, the apparently downward trend was not significant, and, in effect, West Germany had further strengthened its hold on the markets of South Africa during 1966.

Enlarged economic and trade relations were made possible by the tie-up between South African Boer Nationalists and the State capital on the one hand, and West German investments together with its South African partners on the other. This Bonn-Pretoria alliance has now become a reality with West Germany being the biggest trade partner of the racist regime.

The more alarming aspect of these expanding relations is that these extend to building up an atomic arsenal in South Africa which holds a permanent threat to the newly independent developing countries in the African continent. These countries, struggling as they are to end tribalism, and to build up their economies amidst powerful pressures from within and without certainly cannot afford to compete with South Africa. On the other hand, the foreign-backed power acquired by the White minority regime of Vorster has led the small, thinly populated and economically unviable countries like Lesotho, Botswana and Malawi to adopt postures which are unpalatable to the independent States of Africa.

The success of South Africa, and in effect of West Germany, to make the neighbouring "independent" territories adopt anti-African postures, is however cited by Bonn and Pretoria as an instance of the growing realisation in different parts of the world of the cooperative and sympathetic attitude they have adopted to the needy African States.

Real Indignation

However, West Germany is not unaware of the real indignation of the African people against the apartheid regime of South Africa. In fact, the West German Finance Minister Strauss's visit to South Africa at end of March last was coordinated with Foreign Minister Willy Brandt's holiday trip in West Africa during the same period. And, significance was lent to Brandt's holiday trip by the fact that it was preceded by a conference of FRG envoys in Africa in Ivory Coast. Brandt also paid a visit to Accra for talks with the Ghanaian leaders.

The five-day visit to Strauss was described by a spokesman of the West German Christian Socialist Union Party as "a continuation of the visit which Herr Strauss paid to South Africa in April 1966". His first visit had been used to conduct negotiations on the strengthening of military cooperation between Bonn and Pretoria, particularly in the nuclear field. He also contacted the Chemical group SASOL which possesses licences of the former industrial group IG-Farben for manufacturing poisonous gases—tubun, soman and sarin.

On the other hand, Willy Brandt declared at a press conference in Abidjan (Ivory Coast) that West Germany "always abides by the resolutions of the Security Council, notably, on the embargo on armaments deliveries to South Africa and on economic sanctions against Rhodesia". An apt lie to this statement was, however, given by the Tanzanian newspaper *Ngurumo*: "The real aims of the imperialists in West Germany are to retard the progress of the peoples of Africa and to pump fabulous profits out of the African continent," which is the least developed among the developing countries.

This is indicated by their near total dependence on agriculture, extremely low ratio of the manufacturing sector in the national income and lack of trained manpower to man new industrial projects, educational institutions and other sectors being built up for modernisation.

Another aspect relevant to this discussion, however, is the state of Africans in South Africa. Though White workers comprise only about a third of the labour force in industry and much less in mining and agriculture, they enjoy a monopoly of skilled and well-paid jobs. The average monthly earnings of a White worker amount to £ 123.5 as against £17.5 paid to an African. In mines which is the largest employing sector, a White miner gets an average of £130.5 a month, while Africans are paid £8 a month, according to official figures from the S.A. Bureau of Statistics (August 1967).

The significance of this wide gap between wages of the Africans and White workers can be gauged from the fact that the Africans

under the apartheid regime are mostly employed as labour in different fields.

Moreover, the Africans are subject to innumerable restrictions, including the ban on right to form trade unions, moving freely from one place to another, and living with their families. Instead, areas of work have been created and these are called Bantustans where simple norms of human dignity and respect are violated without scruples. The defiance of so-called laws which do not subscribe to the idea of fair play and justice is punishable under the White minority dispensations, and demand for freedom is a cognizable offence under the "Suppression of Communism" and anti-"Terrorist" Acts.

While this is the state of Africans in South Africa, according to a West German report, every year 3000 to 4000 West Germans move to South Africa where they hold key positions in industry, agriculture, management and the army.

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The Film Fiasco—II

PRABHAT MUKERJEE

AFTER a period of hectic attempts at re-valuation, the Film Industry is set to move again but not as yet on an even keel. In fact, far from it.

With the exhibitors in some parts of the country agreeing to show films on straight percentage and artists and musicians willy nilly agreeing to restrict their rampant exploitation of box-office values by regulating their black deals, the Industry can at best be said to be wearing the crown of an uneasy armistice. After everything is said and done, the unalterable fact remains that these are all but pledges of self-regulation which any unholy businessman can throw overboard at the slightest of provocation or the slimmest of opportunity without even as much as a wink. It has happened before and there is no reason to think that it will not happen again.

Besides, the unholyest prop in the film structure—the financier—with his five-per-cent-per-month—take it or leave it—firmness is still at bay, and in more ways than one, it is really he who calls the tune. It is with regard to him that the Industry has the biggest headache and the Government has the biggest role to play in their attempts at stabilising the Industry. That he is significantly important in the whole system has been proved beyond all doubts by the singular fact that while every branch in the Production Sector has been asked to rinse itself clean in the last period of turmoil, not a single finger was raised at the financier, let alone ask him to behave even slightly better.

It is true that as long as the Film Industry remains a private enterprise, the financier as a class cannot altogether be eliminated but he can certainly be curbed by making the average producer independent of him and that is where the Government comes in. Before we get into the problem and see how, we must have a clearer view of the prevailing circumstances and take a very careful note of some very significant facts such as :

- (a) No producer ever makes a film with his own money.
- (b) Borrowing by illegal methods is rampant and the rate of interest and other extortions add up to about 72 percent payable quarterly and a producer has to protect and cover himself against this very heavy odd.
- (c) Most producers have a good part of their cost covered by distributors who also borrow

under heavy odds and are therefore extremely anxious to seek release of films as soon as they get hold of it. This is mostly done by raising weekly rentals of cinemas in unholy competition among each other and by offer of illegal gratification to theatre owners which has since become a standard practice.

- (d) Throughout the country there is an amazing paucity of picture houses as compared to any of the other major film producing centres of the world. In spite of the huge web of TV net-works working round the clock, there is one cinema house for every 4000 persons in Italy, 9000 in USA, 12000 in Japan and 15000 in UK. In India the average is, one cinema house for every 90,000 persons and no other form of entertainment available at all for the average man (this is a point that the advocates of family planning must take a careful and serious note of. Mere education will not do. He must necessarily be provided with alternative entertainment). In addition to restricting the growth of the Film Industry by way of creating acute and all-the-year-round screen time bottle-neck, this paucity has resulted in exhibition monopoly which in turn, has bred nefarious malpractices including bribing top Government servants into abject surrender and political leaders into surreptitious deals.

- (e) Every right-thinking man agrees that tax has to be paid, but it must necessarily be equitable. In the present system the entire tax structure, as we have already seen earlier (*Mainstream*, June 1), is worse than the worst form of extortion and since the Union Government's arbitrary taxation methods offer takes no account of the other man's point of view, one is forced into all sorts of malpractices.

None of these are of any recent origin. They have all been there—except the very heavy taxation—ever since Independence. The first organised effort on the part of the Film Industry to bring the sufferings of the Industry to the notice of the Union Government was made in June 1949 with an All-India Protest Day when all the cinema houses in the country were kept closed for a day as a mark of protest against the Government's taxation policy and their classic indifference to appeals. As a sequel to this mark of protest and accompanying threats, the Government

The first article on this subject by the author appeared in Mainstream (June 1, 1968).

hurriedly set up a Film Enquiry Committee with Sri S. K. Patil as Chairman to (1) enquiry into the growth and organisation of the Film Industry in India and to indicate the lines on which further development should be directed; (2) examine what measures should be adopted to make films in India develop into an effective instrument for the promotion of national culture, education, and healthy entertainment; (3) enquire into the possibility of manufacture of raw film and cinematographic equipment in India. The Committee submitted its report and recommendations in March 1951. Despite the urgency of action recommended by the Film Enquiry Committee to alleviate the distress of the Industry no tangible steps were taken till 1956 when a Bill to set up a National Film Board with a Film Production Bureau, Film Institute and Central Board of Film Censors was introduced.

In matters of the Government's taxation policy, the Film Enquiry Committee was rather casual but the Taxation Enquiry Commission set up by the Union Government in 1953 which was more or less forced by the Film Industry's hue and cry to include the Industry's taxation burden as one of their points of reference examined the subject in depth and remarked, *inter alia* :

"In popular discussion of the problems, equity or fairness in the distribution of the burden is usually regarded as important, if not the outstanding test of a tax system and its ability to improve that confidence in the fiscal basis of Government which sustains public morale and promotes productive effort and economic progress.....

"Now, the most commonly accepted application of the criterion of equity is found in the principle of levying taxes according to relative ability to pay.....

"In fact a promising line of approach to furthering equity or fairness in a tax system is usually by way of eliminating or reducing the elements of unfairness or inequity as regards the tax treatment of persons in similar situations."

In keeping with these observations they very categorically stated that "there is room for all-around reduction in taxes" and recommended a uniform levy of 20 percent on the gross as entertainment tax in all the States. Later on, in 1966, Kher Committee also very strongly recommended that the Government should immediately rationalise the taxation structure of the Film Industry with a view to stabilising it. In spite of these unequivocal and categorical statements by economic experts of the highest integrity not only have the recommendations been totally ignored but taxes imposed, raised and forced upon with threats of dire consequences, with the result that today in no state is the average entertainment tax less than 50 per cent and in West Bengal, with the following slab system, the average is as high as 60 per cent :

Rate of admission	...	Entertainment tax
0 to 19 paise	...	Nil
20 to 50 paise	...	25 percent
51 to 100 paise	...	40 percent
101 to 300 paise	...	75 percent
301 and above	...	100 percent

It would not be out of place to mention in this connection that in the UK there is no entertainment tax at all, in the USA the tax is only 10% for tickets above one dollar and in Japan, Italy and France entertainment tax is levied only on imported films as a sort of protection for the indigenous products.

Experience in recent years has shown us that no more than 15 percent of our films make good their total investment and as such, when one realises that the Government collect their total pound of flesh in the raw even when 85 percent of the films fail to bring back their investment then one cannot but view the taxation structure with contemptuous indignation and cry the doom of the ruling party.

Heinousness of Circumstances

In this connection, the case of a recent Bengali film well illustrates the heinousness of the circumstances in which our producers have perforce to operate. The producer-cum-director, a man with exceptionally sensitive artistic perception, and his well-known actress wife borrowed Rs. three lakhs from the Film Finance Corporation after pawning all their landed property to make, what the discreet audience thought, a good film. After waiting for eighteen months for release (during which period they paid an interest of 9 percent to the FFC) the film flopped rather badly at the box-office and so far, in about six months, the film has grossed a little more than Rs One Lakh. Out of this the Government has taken away Rs 60,000 by way of entertainment tax, the exhibitors have taken Rs 20,000 on paper and Rs 12,000 off the records, the distributing agent has taken Rs 6000 by way of his agency commission, and since in the last week of the first run, the nett collection in the main release house fell short of the 'house protection' by about Rs 2,000, the producer had to make good the deficit with the result that in spite of a total gross of about Rs One Lakh, not only did he not get a single paisa but he had to pay about Rs. one thousand to get back his print. Even if we take away the exhibitors as well as the distributors as the unavoidable devils in the present system, the fact remains that the Government has taken Rs 60,000 as against minus Rs one thousand for the producer. If this is not downright murder of the minstrel, I wonder what is.

As a first step therefore, the Government must immediately order a drastic reduction of entertainment tax and in keeping with the recommendations of the Taxation Enquiry Committee and the Kher Commission, bring it down to a uniform rate of a maximum of 20 percent of the rate of admission all over the country. Unless this is done as the first logical step in the Government's attempt to save the producer from his doom and steer out the Industry from its desperate situation, their bonafides will never cease to be questioned.

Next in order but first on the list of priorities should be to find a solution to the problems concerning scarcity of show houses. Cinemas cannot obviously be built in a day but a beginning can and has to be made and sooner the better. Since the Government has built and helped to build Tourist Centres all over the country to supplement hotels, why not

Government owned and corporation or cooperative society managed cinema houses in capital towns and monopoly stations to begin with ?

If all the capital towns had three chains consisting of three cinema houses each managed by corporations or cooperative societies where films could be released NOT with an eye on the box-office values but strictly and legally in order of censorwise priority and allowed to run on reasonable holdover figures but subject to a limitation of a maximum of say fifteen weeks for the best of the films—as suggested by the Bombay producers themselves—then much of our problems would be solved.

All over the world, after the first charm of box-office and publicity is over, films run on merit alone and therefore, if producers were reasonably certain of the release of their films without cut-throat competition among themselves or underhand means on the part of the exhibitors they would by themselves concentrate on merit and seldom on wrong values. This in turn, will mean loss of glamour values, less of black marketing among stars and music directors, more of better quality films and at least human standards for the presently near starving technicians all over the country. This will also mean stepping down from their high pedestal by exhibitors who are no less responsible for the present state of chaos and disorder.

Tragic Truth

Since these two steps will automatically mean more return to the producer, the next step should be a complete revision of income tax laws in respect of artists and producers.

The artists have since long been claiming a relatively different basis of treatment for their income on the very understandable ground that their working life is relatively short and that during this short stay in career they have to lay by sufficient savings for future period of unemployment and under-employment.

There is yet another very strange psychological factor peculiar to the artist. If a man in, say, hardware business fails to make good, he turns to another business but if an artist fails, he seldom if ever, accepts it and desperately clings to a hope for a next chance—which may never come—but which he is never prepared to give up. This tragic truth is not easy to understand but nevertheless has to be accepted since we call them 'artists' and not professionals in the business of art.

A part of this claim and a good bit of the former argument was accepted by the Patil Committee but totally negated by the Mathai Commission with the result that along with other things, hiding of black money has been perfected into an art—much to the discredit of the Government and dishonour of the artist.

With regard to the producer, amortisation of the cost of production has been a matter of serious concern, for many years. At present 60 percent of the total cost is written off in the first year, 25 percent in the second year and 15 per cent during the third year despite the fact that under present conditions exploitation of the majority of films is completed within one year of release. The Film Enquiry Committee and

the Taxation Enquiry Committee have both recommended the following basis for amortisation :

1st four months	10 percent	per month
2nd " "	6	" " "
3rd " "	3	" " "
4th " "	2	" " "
5th " "	2	" " "
6th " "	2	" " "

This could have been a reasonably acceptable basis on the part of the producers but the Central Board of Revenue has evaded the issue by stating that the present system is capable of adjustments in individual cases. Assessing officers are seldom if ever agreeable to depart from the existing rules, and in the process, they have pushed the producers into unduly inflating their cost in order to escape payment of income tax on fictitious profits. The only way to get the producers out of their inflatory habit is to revise the present laws in the light of the Taxation Enquiry Committee recommendations.

There is yet another way and urgently desirable on grounds of equity and reasonableness in matters of taxation—a revision of the present system of excise levy on prints. Since most Indian films are longer than 3250 metres the present rates of excise duty, printwise, are as follows :

First 8 prints	15 paise per metre
Next 12 " "	25 " " "
Next 15 " "	30 " " "
Next 15 " "	50 " " "
On the balance	50 " " "

While apparently the above slab makes a lot of difference between the small-budget regional films which need less than eight copies for exploitation and the big-budget Hindi films which need an average of more than 50 prints, in actual fact, the average difference between the two extremes is only about Rs 700 per print. In other words, a producer spending no more than Rs 1,25,000 for a 4,000 metre film for a small regional market pays Rs 600 per print as levy whereas a ten million rupee film producer with the whole of India as well as a good bit of the world outside as his market pays an average of Rs 1,350 per print. By the universally accepted norm of levying taxes according to the ability to pay (categorically stressed by the Taxation Enquiry Committee in their report), the duty in the case of the latter producer should have been at least Rs 6,000 per print. In the fitness of things, therefore, the levy should be determined neither by the length nor solely on the number of prints but on the declared cost of the production. The working principle should be, higher the cost, the more the levy.

Fundamentally Wrong

Even though it is fundamentally wrong to tax small-budget and smaller-exploitation area regional films, let us take them as the cost standard of films and calculating on the basis of a minimum yield of Rs 3,000 (5 prints at the rate of Rs 600 per print as excise levy) as excise duty from a film costing Rs 1,25,000 in the making, a film made, say at a cost of Rs 3,75,000 should be expected to yield Rs 9,000. If therefore, the slab is worked out on this basis—with the levy

increasing in direct proportion of the mounting cost, in the same way as in the number of prints at present, then the producers will at once limit their cost, or at any rate, certainly limit their inflatory tactics.

On the other hand, what will be lost by the Government in excise duty in respect of small-budget regional films will be more than gained from the higher budget films as well as from the income tax of all producers.

This will immediately curb the producers' craze of making monkey love in Tokyo and spending lustful evenings in Paris or going round the world with eighty girls a day. Besides, this will also afford the small-budget producers a certain amount of allure-ment to keep on to limited budgets and give them a good deal of welcome protection against unequal competition from, the high-budget films. The slab can be something like this :

<i>Declared cost of production.</i>	<i>Excise duty upto 50 prints.</i>
Upto Rs. 1,25,000	Rs. 1,250
For the next Rs. 1,25,000 or part thereof	„ 2500
For the next Rs. 1,25,000 „ „	„ 5000
For the next Rs. 1,25,000 „ „	„ 7500

Declared cost of production

On the balance

Excise duty upto 50 prints

Rs 7500 for each unit of Rs 1,25,000 or part thereof.

On the basis of the above slab, for a film costing say, Rs 50,00,000 and needing 50 prints, the total excise duty would come to about Rs. 2,70,000 which is as it should be according to the world-wide system of levying taxes in direct proportion to the tax-payers ability to pay. A producer wanting to make a film costing Rs 50 lakhs should be able to pay about Rs. 3 lakhs as excise duty. In the interest of the Industry and its stability, he should be made to pay.

These are but a few of the steps that have perforce to be taken by the Government immediately if the good that has already come out of the two months' hard struggle has to be given a permanent shape. The ground has been prepared by the Industry but it is the Government which has to build on it. So far they have only exploited the Industry. Now is the time for them to expiate their crime. The big million-rupee question is, *will they?*



In three issues of Mainstream (March 30, May 4 and 18), a lively discussion on the role and responsibility of the intellectual today was carried on. Those who have so far participated in this discussion are Lajpat Rai, Sumanta Banerjee, Sankar Ray, M.M. Sankhder and Sipra Sarkar. Here the eminent economist Dr Gyan Chand joins in this discussion.

Responsibility of the Intellectual in India Today

GYAN CHAND

THE crisis, through which the country is passing, cannot be resolved without the dedicated work of a corps of intellectuals who understand its nature and are prepared to work together to resolve it with the perspective of a vision of the future.

The intellectual has to be a man of high attainments, a specialist in a chosen field, vividly

aware of the urgent need of revolution in terms of the liberation of the masses and the end of their exploitation and know the theory and art of bringing about the change of power structure and use his knowledge and specialized experience in concert with other like-minded persons and in a manner as to inspire confidence in the masses and

carry them with him in the onward march. A revolution which brings about a change in the power system has necessarily to reckon with resistance of the classes in power and mount an offensive to face and overcome their resistance.

Anyone who knows the real position today in this country would also know that such

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a corps at present does not exist and a beginning in organizing it has yet to be made. The concept of an intellectual, who knows life in its entirety, can express his knowledge in action needed to solve the real problems and create and become the motor power is a part of our national culture and history. In the 19th and 20th century India had thrown up leaders of great eminence who looked ahead, combined vision and insight with the capacity for starting, developing and leading social, cultural and political movements. Modern India has been made by these eminent intellectuals, but we have come to a turning point in our life when an intellectual has first and foremost to be a revolutionary who knows that a change in class structure is absolutely essential for a real liberation of the people and the problems of poverty and inequality cannot be solved without a fundamental change in social relations and the use of modern technique in an entirely changed social context.

Schismatic Trends

This in effect means that an intellectual has to be a revolutionary in thought and practice, and the corps referred to above has to be a corps of revolutionaries banded together by a common purpose, a common approach and a common agreed line of action.

But this object can be achieved only if revolutionaries have a very broad approach, avoid sectarianism in any shape or form, and the concert which they realise is a real concert of many voices, notes and instruments. Marxism which could be the basis of revolution has, on account of its many aberrations, acquired a thick crust, gathered round itself a miasma created by many distortions and perversions through which it has passed and is now suffering grievously from schismatic trends which are so much to the fore.

These trends have acquired practical importance and are now generating bitterness and even fratricidal tendencies because it is not realized that the crisis,

which we have to face, has been created by confrontation between the past and the future, the status quo and call of the revolution; and a decisive phase in this struggle has been reached in which petty strife based upon narrow personal or sectarian considerations would only strengthen reactionary forces and sap the energy needed for combating the entrenched interests and generating a broad catholic understanding of the forces at work to utilize them in a forward-looking manner with a will to action in face of the overwhelming odds.

Clarity, Confidence and Humility

These schismatic trends and the strife which has been created by them only indicate that judgement of men who regard themselves as a vanguard is clouded by narrow-minded polemics and manoeuvres based upon petty struggle for power in the zig-zag of unedifying jockeying for positions of vantage. An intellectual, who can see through and beyond the dust of these polemics, should use his wide understanding and with objectivity as his hallmark, should point out the puerility of the squabbles, and see himself and help others to see things in their right perspectives.

The intellectual, in the present context, has to be primarily a revolutionary—he has to know clearly that the present social system has exhausted its potential as a force for good and now can only block the way to the future. In more propitious times he can be dynamic without being a revolutionary and need not think in terms of basic social changes. At present, however, he has, if he is an intellectual at all, to know that revolution is absolutely an imperative and inescapable. If he does not know this and does not base his thought and action on this premise, he can only live in a world which is dying, if not already dead, and think in terms of a framework which is not irrelevant to the tasks of today and tomorrow, but what is worse, he has to become, in the words of a French writer, a harlot—a hire-

ling of the man in power and serve their sinister interests.

That is what most of our so-called intellectuals are in fact doing to-day—they are using their talents such as they have, and attainment to prop up the status quo and use spacious but in fact most elusive—not unoften fundamentally dishonest—arguments to divert men's minds from real tasks and problems. In other words a real intellectual, who is honest to himself and to the community has to make his choice. He has either to throw in his lot with the forces which are operating in terms of an emergent future and creating new values in the perspective of the needs of a new system and new life, or he has to serve the men who are set on prolonging their power and control of the community's resources and do so without any qualms of social conscience.

True Intellectual

A true intellectual has to be a man of vision, understand that the crisis in India and elsewhere is due to the men in power being aware of their end being writ large on the wall and then being bent on using their immense resources to put off their doom as long as they can. A gifted man with high attainments can use what he has in him to serve the interests without any future but whose power for evil has not yet been undermined and exhausted. These men can put a gloss on things, make black look white, and in effect become the props of the sinister interests. Such a man has mental capacity, is knowledgeable and can also develop drive and be effective in action. But he is not an intellectual in the sense in which the word is being used here, he is a servitor of anti-revolutionary interests and he and his sort can only fight a rearguard action until they are thrown on the scrapheap of history to which they virtually already belong. A real intellectual ranges himself against the dying order and its minions but knows that the latter (the minions) are to be pitied more than hated for owing to their being without light, they are missing the precious

opportunity of joining the ranks of those to whom the advent of revolution is a reality and who can clearly see that only it is in the making but also inevitable.

The true intellectual has not only to make his choice with clear-sightedness and confidence but also in all humility. He has to know that in the epic which is being enacted and in which he has to play a creative role, there can be no place for arrogance or mental or spiritual snobbery. If he has a serene and unperturbed mind—that is, he is a *Stith-pragnya* of the Bhagvat Gita and knows that there is a scheme of things entire in which he has a specific place of his own in these momentous times, he will avoid conceit and seek, it may be repeated, to participate in a concert through which the spirit of times has to express itself in all its depth, richness and diversity.

Finding a Modus Operandi

Such an intellectual necessarily cannot and should not plough a lonely furrow. He has to be in contact with kindred spirits who too have ear for the new music with which the air is full and can respond to it with all their being. The organizational aspect of this co-operative endeavour needs to be considered, and though some intellectuals may belong to a political party and work through and for it, most of them can be most effective if they retain their detachment, independence and objectivity and can in fact be 'activists' in the best sense and yet not be involved in party strife. Marx conceived a new type of revolutionaries—not of Lenin's type but a group which will be the inner core of all revolutionary currents and movements without being identified with any of them. This did not happen and the monolithic, well disciplined and militant parties took the stage and made history.

These parties have made and sustained revolutions and have, in the process, owing to the conjuncture of events and their inner failings, suffered from serious aberrations in spite of their having played heroic roles

and produced an impact of great force and immense significance. In these monolithic parties the intellectual has been submerged and practically lost his soul.

The new forces now at work are, in socialist countries including China, in a state of ferment and would probably retrieve the situation. The recent events in Czechoslovakia, Poland and Rumania are a very clear indication not only of protest, dissent and even revolt but also of new upsurge of great significance for these countries and the world. They are up against the hang-over of the rigidity of the Stalinist era but are definitely reaching out for broader unity and understanding within these countries and also with the revolutionary trends in the developed industrial countries and the undeveloped countries in which socialism exists only in a nucleated form and nationalism and self-reliance are the most decisive forces. This broad unity and understanding are very urgently needed and would, besides releasing new forces in socialist countries, it may be hoped, become a part of massive ground well all over the world.

In India the intellectuals, like the politicians and other leaders in the field of thought and action, are in a state of great disarray and finding it exceedingly difficult to locate and develop new centres of thought and effective action. In this state of uncertainty and whirl of currents and cross-currents, importance of the intellectual becomes all the greater, but though he has to be detached and objective, he must not "go it alone" or strike futile seemingly original postures. He has to find a *modus-operandi* of working with kindred spirits in all fields and develop a new mode of creative co-operative endeavour.

Forming Nuclei

It is not possible to be more concrete and state what form this effort should take, but if the urgency of meeting the mounting offensive of the national and foreign reactionaries is understood and realized, the intellectual cannot remain merely on

the periphery of thought and action. He has to throw himself into the fray and be fully prepared to play an active part in the epic war of gigantic forces. The number of real intellectuals in India, who see clearly the nature and substance of the present situation fully in all its dimension and are eager to use their knowledge, experience, attainments and expertise for taking this position in this great array for and against social revolution, is exceedingly small.

That is all the more reason why nuclei of penetrating thought and effective action should be formed and get linked up with similar nuclei all over the country. These new centres will need full participation by all genuine intellectuals who will operate in all fields of importance and combine for co-ordinated thinking and action on all points. A few such centres have to be formed purposively in places of strategic importance, proliferate by a process of natural diffusion and become in time an all-pervasive force in the dynamic life of the country.

Fabian Society

This may seem a nebulous—really amorphous—idea. The Fabian society is known, by a process of permeation, to have greatly influenced the evolution of social ideas and trends in the United Kingdom without identifying itself even with the Labour Party. But the Fabian Society had even an anti-class struggle approach and believed in gradualism in their analysis and formulations of social problems.

The intellectuals in India can learn from the experience of the Fabian Society but should know that the conditions in India are entirely different from those in which the Fabians started their work in the United Kingdom and the way they operated. The fact-finding approach of the Fabians and their application and industry are needed in India, and the intellectuals can, with advantage emulate their example in this respect. But the struggle of class forces in the world and India is most glaring fundamental fact of the existing situation and should

provide the framework for thinking of our intellectuals. The latter have, as pointed out above, to make their choice and take a very clear and unambiguous stand in the present alignments. They must know that the compulsion of events and the increasing intensity of the struggle that is now coming to a head leaves them no room for facing both ways. They have to be detached and objective, have a sense of perspective and proportion, have a composure of mind in the bewildering complexity of the situation and be as clear-sighted as possible and their value judgement should not be impaired by the exigencies of the struggle. But there should be no doubt in their mind that they have to work for social revolution and know the sinister designs and programme of the anti-revolutionaries who are, with all the advantages which they enjoy owing to their being in control of the key point of the status-quo, very powerful and are, it is clear, becoming more and more aware of the issues at stake and mean to use their immense power to hold on to the present inequitable social order and resist all efforts of the revolutionary forces to undermine, overthrow and replace it by a new order based on justice, equality and brotherhood.

Violence vs. Non-violence

At this point, the issue of means and ends has to be faced. Should the intellectual foreswear violence? This question has to be understood in the context of the knowledge how the use of violence has led to the use of terror as an instrument of policy on a vast scale in the Communist countries and how, in spite of all the great good that social revolution has brought to the peoples of one-third of the world and more than twelve years of efforts to undo the evil effects of such regimes euphemistically called the 'the cult of personality', nearly one billion peoples living in the Communist countries are still suffering grievously from its aftermath.

This is true and yet it is a great over-simplification of the problem to pose it in terms of

the Gandhian approach and call upon the intellectuals to abjure violence at all costs. Unfortunately, social revolutions, so far as is known, have been violent revolutions in all cases and voluntary abdications of power by the ruling socially impervious class and class-bound oligarchies has practically been unknown. The view that violence has to be the midwife of revolution is fully supported by the facts of history and the attainment of independence by India under the leadership of Gandhi and political liberation of so many countries in Asia and Africa after 1945 does not disprove it, even though revolutionary significance of this massive fact of contemporary world history cannot possibly be denied.

Process of Basic Changes

Social revolution is a process which involves basic changes in the whole social system in its aspects—in production, distribution and exchange, in the framework and normative principles of social relations, in the complex of values, in the educational and cultural systems and in the content of attitude towards life and all its meaning; but first and foremost, it involves change in power-structure and property relations. The change in power-pattern is not all that social revolution signifies but without it social revolution cannot even be initiated, what to speak of its being developed and brought to a state of maturity. This change has to be preceded by a revolt against the men and classes in power—a revolt based upon the pressure exercised by the masses. This pressure has to be essentially a social pressure—it has to be generated and directed by leaders of the people by winning their confidence, giving them a new social vision to work and live for and generating and sustaining their will to action. Under a system of representative institution, freedom of expression and association and opportunities of political education, the revolt of the masses can be organized and if it becomes meaningful because of a faith in a new social order, its values and prime-movers, it can even in its

inception become a social revolution—beginning of a new social order with comprehensive and complete social change in the making.

Revolt against and overthrow of the classes in power is essential for bringing about the new social order. The crucial point is as to whether this overthrow can be effected without recourse to violence. The fact that this has not happened on any significant scale in the past is a good basis for presumptive doubt as to whether resort to violence can be avoided. That it should be, if possible, admits of no disagreement. Violence is an evil and is undesirable, but if it is also, unnecessary, its avoidance becomes a social imperative. This means that 'the capture of power' by the ballot box combined with the use of extra-constitutional strength of the people has to be seriously attempted and realised.

It is likely that the classes in power, when their position is seriously challenged and the end of their power is in sight, would use all their resources to negate the use of 'peaceful' or 'democratic' methods. A counter-poise against the abuse of their power has to be built up and brought into action. If this cannot be done, frustration of democratic processes is implicit in the social set-up and cannot be avoided.

The intellectuals have to provide social analysis by which the balance of forces can be measured and the need for this balance being purposively used to promote and realize revolutionary ends has to be brought home to the people and the methods by which this realization can become the basis for revolutionary action have to be evolved and used.

Prospect of Peaceful Method

In India just now there is a sporting chance that this can and will be done. The counter-revolutionary forces are organizing themselves, increasing their strength and are receiving foreign assistance in devious forms. But the victory of these forces is not a foregone conclusion and the immediate task of the intellectual

is to show to the people that if they are aware of the dangers so clearly looming ahead, they can forestall the sinister designs of the forces of darkness, checkmate them and make a beginning in occupying the strategic points of the social system. Things are coming to a head but the game is not lost—not yet. Violence is not only undesirable in itself, but under the existing circumstances, it can have dangerous consequences—it can make counter-revolution inevitable. This is a real danger and that is why the organized strength of the masses—of the workers, peasants and agricultural proletariat—and politically awakened intelligentsia has to be mobilized and utilized for revolutionary ends. The pacifists, who are against violence under any circumstances, have to realize the futility of their plea.

Not Simple Issue

A democratic alternative to the use of violence has to be found and utilized. This is the most effective method of decisive non-violent action for revolutionary purposes. The advocates of non-violence do not see the validity of this point and therefore condemn themselves to futility. We are living in a world in which national issues become international problems; for instance Vietnam. India is a very important element in the world balances of forces, and if she becomes a minus quantity from the standpoint of one of the super-powers—she will become a vortex for the struggle for power. For peace of the world and the future of this country it is essential that the urgent need for 'peaceful' revolution in this country should be understood and the forces for bringing it about generated, developed and put into action.

Violence *versus* non-violence is not a simple issue. The intellectuals have to unravel this issue in the complexities of today. Violence cannot and should not be abjured. There would have been no Russian or Chinese revolution without violence, and anyone, who posits that, in spite of tremendous cost of these revolutions, all the good that they have brought could have been

realized without violence or should have been foregone owing to the necessity of using violence, is living in a world of illusions and cannot possibly be taken seriously.

The conclusion of course is that in the present context, violence can and probably will have dangerous consequences from the national and inter-national standpoints and has to be avoided as far as possible. But whether it can or will be avoided would depend upon the revolutionary forces being stronger than counter-revolutionary forces. It is a counsel of madness to think in terms of a violent revolution if the way of non-violent revolution is open. But the counter-revolutionaries have to know that it is open and any recourse to violence by them would only recoil on them and hasten the end of their entrenched position and power.

To have this understanding and make it a basis for effective action is a special task of the intellectual today in this country. Compassion is the essence of non-violence and a socialist revolution without compassion in the real sense would lose all meaning and appeal. It has to be the substance of the revolution when it is consummated; but it has also to be the inspiration, moving and sustaining force in its very initial stages and its development through successive stages. Overpowering strength of the masses used with a clear sense of direction and in an effective manner is the only way in which violent revolution can be averted. Violence or non-violence is not a metaphysical issue. It is a cardinal issue of social analysis and social strategy and has to be understood and treated as such.

Steering People against Counter-revolution

It may be repeated in conclusion that in the crisis-ridden situation in the country we need a corps of intellectuals who realize the gravity of the position, have clarity of understanding, know that the prime task of to-day is to realize that there is a state of confrontation between potential revolutionary trends and the black forces which want to defend

their property and power interests, and are virtually in league with similar forces all over the world, specially in USA and are intent upon blocking the way to liberation and socialism. This sinister massive combination of black forces has to be countered with knowledge, strength and determination by the power of the people steered by the intellectuals who are aware that a social strategy in this context has to be developed and used for revolutionary ends, can master scientific and social technique needed for the purpose, fight hunger, poverty and social servitude, do so with knowledge that they (intellectuals) have to establish living contact among themselves and with the downtrodden, that is, the majority of the people and awaken them to the need of vanquishing the interests which are fighting for their paltry sectional gains and are prepared to sacrifice the future of this country to defend and maintain their privileged position and power.

India has produced many great intellectuals in her history, specially in the 19th and 20th centuries. But we are at present passing through a sterile phase of our national life and small men with no vision, understanding and ability are to the fore in all political parties and even in social movements. The Universities and University-trained men have fallen on evil days and are lost in petty strife and pursuit of sordid ends. The outlook from this standpoint is definitely gloomy and yet the small stirrings of new life, new sense of urgency and a new vision of the future are manifesting themselves in various ways.

The genuine intellectuals have to sense the reality of the situation, evolve methods of co-operative action and array themselves against the forces to which reference has been made above. In spite of many evil auguries, it is necessary to revive faith in the destiny and potential of our people. This faith was a great factor even in the dark days of our struggle for political freedom; it can become a greater force in our struggle for social liberation.

A Multi-dimensional Image

An Artist in Life by Niharranjan Ray (Published by University of Kerala, Trivandrum, December 1967, pp. 480; Price Rs 30)

ABOUT himself Tagore said once: "There is no end to the dispute as to what really is my own nature. This much only I realize every day, that it is not merely a poet's nature. My task does not end in having a power of appreciation and in expressing it in delightful words. I have a liability in every area of existence—how to add up all these accounts in a sum total?" (Letter to Smt Rani Mahalanobis).

In *An Artist in Life* Dr Niharranjan Ray has attempted the stupendous task of seizing this multi-dimensional image of Tagore, his interests and contributions in all the various areas of existence—the fine arts, religion, philosophy and politics.

Dr Ray emphasizes the totality and integrity of the poet's life and works, and refuses therefore to take them apart and discuss his literature in fragments. The image of a banyan tree, frequently used in the past in judging the growth of great men, reappears in this book when the author divides Tagore's life into certain stages—Germination: Early Blossoms (1872-1888); Fruits of Maturity (1889-1900); Fruits for Offering (1901-1913); The Nest and the Sky (1914-1925); New Life: New Flowers (1926-1937); The Sunset Glow (1931-1941).

Quite appropriately the author begins his book with an account of the contemporary life in Bengal when Rabindranath was born and of the cross-currents in the socio-political life which influenced the young poet's growth. These chapters have an interest of their own apart from their relevance to the poet's background. For, in them, Dr Ray indicates the basic strength and weakness of Indian culture. He analyzes for instance Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's role in contemporary society and, while paying tribute to him for his literary achievements, with sharp

insight points out his contradictions, particularly his penchant for Hindu revivalist ideas. One cannot but agree with Dr Ray's conclusion: "Our culture has remained progressive and reactionary at the same time, and so has advanced less rapidly than our political progress."

It is important to consider Tagore's emergence in this background. Dr Ray attaches particular significance to young Rabindranath's decision to draw himself away from the heroic and mythological tradition and his acceptance of the lyric as the medium of his creative expression. The author feels that this ushered in the modern age at one stroke in Bengali literature. He also contrasts in this connection Bankim's tendency to emphasize the aggressive, narrow and sectarian aspects of the Hindu-Moghul conflict with Tagore's attempt to bring out the nobler and undying qualities of the human spirit in suffering and death.

Considering Tagore's early works, Dr Ray stresses the loneliness of young Rabindranath and as a result the "sterile self-obsession" that dominated his early work. The watershed was the composition of *Nirjharer Swapnabhanga* or the Awakening of the Mountain Stream, which suggested that the poet had completely "shattered the shell of egoism that had cribbed and confined his soul so long."

The author also analyzes his novels of this period which although suffer from immaturities, produce several characters which were to reappear, again and again, in one form or other, in his future novels. The author also follows young Tagore through his involvements in the contemporary socio-political turmoil. This is the beginning of Tagore's life-long attachment to the nation's political destiny—a problem which never let him rest, although

at times he deliberately retreated into his own self, when he could not reconcile himself to the trends that reared their heads, both in Gandhiji's non-violent movement and in the anarchist creed.

As the author painstakingly follows the poet's journey in the literary field, he tries to indicate how Tagore's vision expands, how he probes deeper into the mysteries of life. The titles of the chapters are suggestive of the stages of this growth—Germination and Early Blossoms, Fruits of Maturity, Fruits for Offering, the Nest and the Sky. The familiar stories about the poet's bereavements and sufferings are here. The fairly well-known poems and novels are discussed. But all along Dr Ray attempts to show through the narration and the discussion the gradually expanding character, the all-pervasive nature of the poet's life and literary output. This outlook saves the book from becoming yet another pedantic repetitious treatise on Tagore's life and work.

The author is perhaps at his best when he comes towards the end, particularly when he discusses the works written between 1926 and 1941. This may be because Tagore emerges as a fully integrated personality in this period. His experiments with new techniques in verse, the change in his attitude towards death particularly after a severe illness, the fascinating novels he wrote and his prolific output of paintings—all these serve to make the period a dazzling epoch in the poet's life.

Side by side with this of course was the poet's growing interest in the world outside India. He was emerging as an international literary figure. Receptive to every important political happening in every corner of the world, he was fast assuming the role of a modern committed intellectual. Dr Ray in this connection traces the poet's new found love for the "stark and stern facts of human existence in the context of our social situation," to his visit to the Soviet Union in the thirties. His steadfast opposition to imperialism at home and slashing attack on fascism abroad made Tagore during this period an integrated

humanist.

Particularly sensitive is Dr Ray's interpretation of the last poems of Tagore. The poems have become strangely terse and dignified. "Realising death more deeply and intimately than ever before, the poet can now see into the life of things with an assured clarity, a firm faith."... "Never before have we seen such beauty and such simplicity, such bare and naked glory of language, such fulness of knowledge and vision, such renunciation and such joy, such faith and hope and strength. ...One can only ask in wonder: Can we call these poems in the accepted sense of the term! or are they the voice, the mantram of the inspired seer?"

One wishes the author could show the same sensitivity in his interpretation of some of the novels written by Tagore. Although Dr Ray acknowledges the importance of *Chaturanga* ("...one of the finest, one of the tensest and one of the most compact and competent works of art that Tagore ever produced.") one cannot agree with his criticism of the novel. According to him, "*Chaturanga* just falls short of greatness. It has depth of understanding of human situations, but not breadth, and no magnitude of substance, it establishes no relation with the many-sided cur-

rents of human life. Its outlook is fragmentary; it does not reflect the vision and imagination of total life." Are these the requirements by which we should judge the merits of a modern work of fiction? A deep probe into a fragment of human existence or even a single individual soul can yield material fascinating enough to build up a novel, without the author's being obliged to link it with "many sided currents of human life." One can refer for instance to Dostoyevsky's novels.

Dr Ray's criticism of the later novels of Tagore also seem to be based on the same demands for "coherence of construction, solidity of structure and roundness and intensity of characters"—characteristics which are no longer accepted as necessary for a novel to be great. Although Dr Ray acknowledges that irony, dry humour, intellectual penetration and deep wisdom are to be found in these novels—*Shesher Kabita*, *Char Adhyay*, *Dui Bon*, *Malancha*—he complains that their bodies are "rather thin, the endings rather weak and unconvincing, and there are loose-ends in their construction."

The last part of the book is devoted to an interpretation of the poet's social thought. The author again stresses here that

art and poetry, religious and philosophical ideas, participation in politics and social engagements are all but parts or segments of the poet's being which are "one and indivisible." By re-emphasizing in this part the integrated nature of this aspect of Tagore's activities, Dr Ray strengthens his thesis that the poet's genius should be grasped as a whole, understood in its development, stage by stage. Each activity is a link necessary to appreciate the totality of the poet's nature.

Sumanta Banerjee

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DULL SOSHITS (Continued from Page 16)

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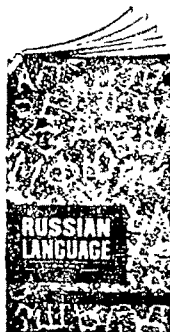
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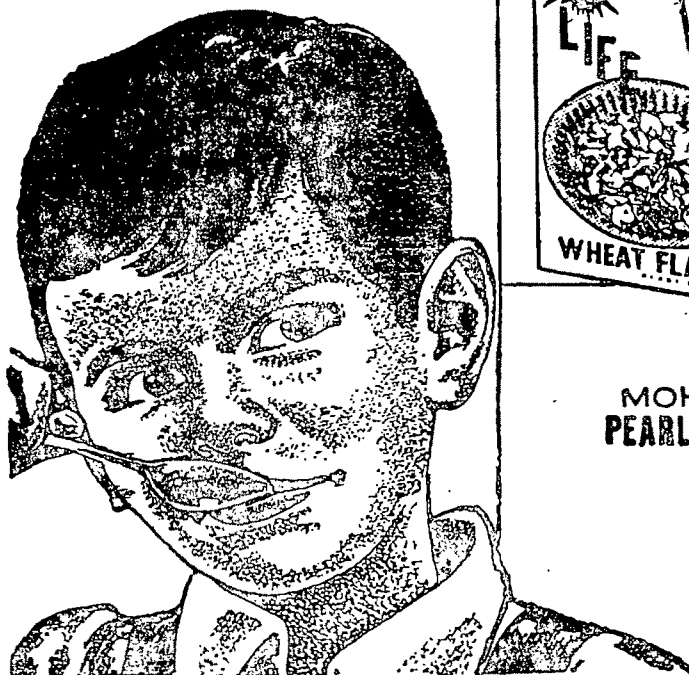
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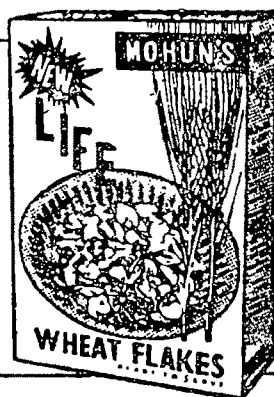
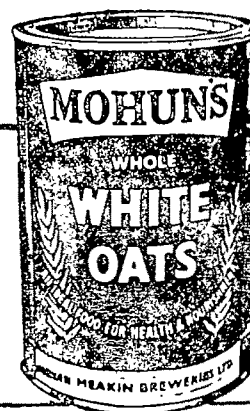


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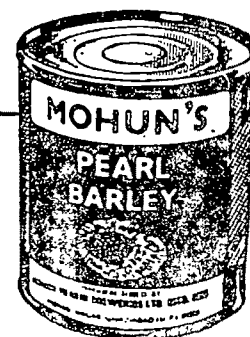
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JANA SANGH'S NEW TACTICS

ONLY the utterly naïve will be taken in by the Bharatiya Jana Sangh's latest expression of "deep concern" over the increasing frequency of communal disturbances in the country. Neither the Jana Sangh's close identification with the fascist RSS nor the role of RSS cadres during outbursts of communal violence in several parts of India is unknown to the public. It is equally well known that several leading spokesmen of the Sangh have in their public utterances sought to intensify suspicions and

ill feelings between communities by deliberately casting aspersions on the Muslim section of our population. One of them not long ago was presumptuous enough to suggest that Muslims should be "nationalised", that they should "prove" their "loyalty". Eruption of communal violence has in many places taken place in the wake of such provocative speeches by Jan Sangh and RSS leaders. The sedulous propagation of the cow cult and the organisation of demonstrations for the purpose were indeed part of the deliberate attack on minority communities and had little to do with the preservation of Hindu religious or cultural values.

It is therefore strange that such an organisation should have suddenly developed a revulsion for communal disturbances and tried to shift the responsibility for them to other shoulders. It is difficult to believe that the Sangh has indeed woken up to the fact that such disturbances will "endanger the very existence of the country." The Sangh Working Committee has chosen to accuse secular parties—some of which made the costly mistake of allying themselves with the Sangh under the spell of the "anti-Congress" fever—of "trying to exploit the (communal) problem for their own ends." The reason for this attack is that the progressive secular parties, when they realised that the Sangh had not given up its communal outlook and that the RSS cadres were actively engaged in engineering and intensifying communal disturbances, did not hesitate to expose these activities and put the blame squarely on the Sangh and its leadership.

The purpose of the Jana Sangh Working Committee's elaborate resolution on the subject however becomes clear on close reading. The aim is not to end communal disturbances and ensure harmony and goodwill among different sections of the people, but to make out that the minority community

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is responsible for the frequent outbursts. For, instead of demanding that all communal bodies should be banned and communal elements put down with an iron hand, as a genuinely secular party would have demanded without the least hesitation, the Jana Sangh in its resolution talks of divisive forces within the country acting in collusion with a "foreign hand." Since the Hindu communalists' connections with "foreign hands" are a well-guarded secret, the Sangh's aim can only be seen as to imply an attack on Muslims and Pakistan. This reading of the resolution is fully justified by the past attitude of the Sangh and those in the RSS who mastermind its political activities. It is precisely this kind of insinuation against a minority community persistently and unrestrainedly put forward without any regard for truth or proof that has poisoned the atmosphere in the country. The Sangh's resolution is in short a cleverly worded piece whose purpose is to provide an alibi for Hindu communalism and to accuse Muslims of being anti-national.

From the tone and contents of the resolution it is also clear that the Jana Sangh has become aware that at long last those in power at the Centre have woken up to the danger of allowing Hindu communal forces to have a free hand. The Srinagar meeting of the National Integration Council may not achieve much, but there can be no doubt that it marks a beginning in the direction of secular forces joining hands against the communalists, whether of the majority or of the minority community. Realizing that a concerted drive by all the secular forces in the country can lead to the isolation and total exposure of the communal forces, the Jana Sangh is anxious to gain respectability by getting on to the secular bandwagon. Thus alone can the fight against communalism be sabotaged from within, and it is reasonable to conclude that this is what the Jana Sangh aims to do by adopting the present posture of concern for communal harmony.

It is no accident that the Sangh had earlier objected to the presence at the National Integration Council meeting of persons known for their lifelong dedication to the cause of communal harmony and for their relentless and fearless fight against the Hindu communal forces. Nor is it without significance that the Sangh sought an assurance from the Prime Minister that at the meeting the Sangh would

not be "maligned". On the one hand the Jana Sangh does not want to face a charge-sheet and on the other it does not want to be left out of a set-up in which it can take care of the interests of the communal para-military organisation associated with it. The Sangh's resolution has thus to be seen as new tactics to carry forward its old line rather than as the result of any change of heart or attitude to the problem of communalism. The real aim of the Sangh is to divert attention away from Hindu communalism, which is the real problem, to Muslim communalism which is merely an offshoot. The aim is to get the Muslim communal organisations suppressed while the Hindu communal organisations are left free to pursue their mission of establishing a fascist communal State of their own.

It is obvious that in many parts of the country where the RSS has been allowed to grow in strength Muslims live in fear. There is a sense of insecurity prevalent in such areas. These circumstances make it easy for Muslim communalists to misguide even peace-loving members of the minority and persuade them to take steps for "self-defence." If some sections of Muslims succumb to such advice, the reason is to be found in the fact that the majority community has been unable to prevent the communal elements in it from engineering murder, loot and arson on the slightest pretext.

It is therefore clear that the first task of the secular forces as well as of the Government in this country is to put down majority communalism with an iron hand. Once this is done and the Muslim masses are made to feel that they can live in tranquillity as equal citizens, it will be very easy to isolate Muslim communal groups as well. This is a task of gigantic proportions that calls for concerted and unrelenting effort by all secular, democratic forces in all communities. It is to be expected that communalists will infiltrate into all organisations that may undertake this work as well as into the administration; progressive parties and individuals have constantly to be on guard against these, for otherwise there is the danger that the drive against communalism will be converted into one more instrument to harass Muslims and make them feel even more insecure than they do now.

Such a development will indeed spell the end of our secular democracy.

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HOW STRONG IS OUR SECULARISM ?

LAST week, Union Home Minister addressing the Parliamentary Consultative Committee for UP emphasised the urgency of fighting the evil of communal politics "in all forms and at all levels". A fortnight ago, the Prime Minister stressed before the AICC the need to defend secularism before one could talk of democracy and socialism.

The Government's anxiety to lay stress on the menace of communalism is understandable and at this week's National Integration Council meeting, this item naturally would get the top priority though there are no doubt other fissiparous tendencies which need to be checked. The urgency of fighting communalism can be gauged from the fact that in the last four years there have taken place over two thousand cases of communal violence in this country as compared to about six hundred in the entire ten years previous to Nehru's death. And barring the incidents in 1964, these can by no means be regarded as a rebound to any upsurge of communal violence in Pakistan.

The Government is not unaware of the enormity of this rising menace. A report on the communal violence in this country during last year brings out certain startling developments. First, the accent on stirring up trouble over Urdu is a new phenomenon which underlines the definitely political twist that the culprits have now been trying to give to communal violence. Of these, the Ranchi riots of last year were the most gruesome.

Secondly, a deliberate attempt was made by the Jana Sangh, particularly by Sri Balraj Madhok, to spread the embers of communalism to Kashmir, a State which with all its multifarious problems was so long free from communal disturbances.

A third feature has been the fairly large-scale involvement of the student community in an almost organised fashion. The most shocking was the case of the Hindu students of the Ranchi Medical College participating actively in the assaults on their Muslim fellow students. In Kashmir also, the students were drawn into the communal outbursts.

What is more serious is the fact that in recent years, some of the major industrial centres of the country have been getting involved in communal violence. This happened in Jamshedpur, Rourkela and Ranchi. What is disturbing is that at the centre where up-to-date productive forces are engaged, this relic of medieval mentality is raising its head in all its ugliness. The political and social implications of this development can hardly be minimised, apart from its underlining the fact that the trade union movement in this country has yet to take up the defence of secularism as one of its priority jobs.

In fact, the struggle against communalism has practically been labelled as a non-political pursuit, almost a fad of some well-meaning liberals or ineffective Gandhites, while the doctrinaire Left position is content with merely pointing out that all communalism would go once the

Congress Raj is destroyed. Without minimising the responsibility of the Congress leadership in letting communal forces grow under its twenty-year rule, it would be pertinent to point out that even under Left-dominated United Front Governments in Kerala and West Bengal, communal forces have not been inactive, and that the worst communal holocaust of recent years was perpetrated at Ranchi when a United Front Government was in office. It is therefore not without significance that the reactionary forces that unleash communal violence have calculatedly chosen new areas of working-class concentration as their targets, so that the Left could be crippled at its very base.

It is interesting to learn from a Home Ministry study that of the 169 incidents under scrutiny in 1967, only 60 took place in rural areas and 109 in urban areas. This is a feature of communalism which has continued since the British days except for the bloody interlude of the post-partition massacres. Here too one has to note that this development is not so much due to accident as by design. Reactionary forces reckon that their enemies are to be found in the politicised climate of the city rather than in the slumbering village, and it is also in the city that they can hire the lumpen elements to carry out their nefarious designs.

* * *

THE responsibility for this deteriorating situation rests squarely on the shoulders of all parties that stand for secularism.

A myth sedulously spread by the Hindu communalist reactionaries is that the Muslims can hardly be trusted as they are all in their hearts pro-Pakistanis: this slander has spared nobody, not even the most eminent and respected in the Muslim community, many of whom have sacrificed their all and risked their lives to uphold Indian secularism; their aversion to the Muslim League's communal politics was so intense that they refused to reconcile themselves to the creation of Pakistan. Among these unswerving upholders of Indian secularism stands our respected President, and yet most despicable slanders were spread against him by communal reactionaries during the Indo-Pak conflict of 1965, and these one could hear even among the fashionable smart set of New Delhi who claim to be chic and modern.

It is no secret that in the heartland of Hindu reaction, inter-communal fraternisation continues to be a taboo: inter-communal marriages are widely frowned upon, and those who brave the stifling prejudices often find it difficult even in the Capital of India to get living tenements. To a large measure such discrimination could be noticed also in the matter of educational facilities for the children of the minority community. Employment openings are often barred by unwritten rules, and the absence of Muslim personnel in the higher echelons of administration can hardly be explained away on grounds of paucity of qualified hands. Many more of such uncomfortable facts are treated here as unmentionable on the rather fatuous plea that it would help Pakistan in its anti-India campaign—as if Pakistan is short of propaganda ammunition on this score.

A complacent attitude towards the entire question of secularism is noticeable in the case of all progressive forces in the country. The mere fact that secularism is enshrined in the Constitution of our Republic has led many in this country to take it for granted that the minorities are ensured of all the

rights and liberties of a citizen. What is often missed is that a citizen's rights, particularly for one belonging to a minority community, need constant vigilance. And this vigilance cannot be exercised by the minority community itself but by all those who stand for secularism. Defence of secularism cannot be the responsibility of the minority community; it is the sacred trust that has to be upheld by all democrats, particularly by those belonging to the majority community. In other words, our democracy can never be adequate unless it ensures secularism, while every fighter for democracy has to realise that the very forces that undermine our secularism are interested in subverting democracy and attacking the forces that struggle for socialism.

Viewed in this context, certain negative developments in the progressive movement can hardly be overlooked. In the past, when the Left parties were far weaker, it was an article of faith for the Communists and Socialists to protect the lives of the minority communities even at the risk of their own lives: there are shining instances of glorious martyrdom when such crusaders gave their lives to defend their brothers and sisters of the minority communities. But this noble passion seems to have subsided a lot: could it be because of the fear of losing popularity in one's constituency? The courage to be unpopular, to be in or with a minority, to defy a majority misled or prejudiced, has long been the hallmark of true Leftism; it would be wrong to think that compulsions of parliamentary politics demand that one should always swim with the tide. If a crowd is whipped up in frenzy, it does not follow that one should join in the madness sacrificing all principles; nor is it practical politics, since in its saner moment the *demos* will listen to the voice of reason and not of the rabble rouser. A Leftist who does not believe in made-easy effects but has unswerving faith in the cause that he champions does not have to compete with

quick-change politicians for seeking votes.

The dangerous theory of swimming with the tide last year led the Left parties to agree to form coalition Ministries with communal reactionary elements. No doubt the mass euphoria of having an opportunity to dislodge the Congress from power did grip many sections of the public and it is no easy task to ignore it. At the same time, it would be a mistake for any Left party—not only the Communists—to forget or ignore the price one has to pay for this short-lived opportunity of running the administration for the benefit of the common people. Apart from the fact that the Jana Sangh and other reactionary forces constitute a stumbling block to many moves for economic reforms, the very fact that these elements could earn the respectability of associating themselves in Government with Left parties gave them an advantage which they could exploit fully.

Secondly, such association cramped the vigilance, if not the freedom, of the Left parties to combat communalism. No doubt, many of the Left, particularly the Communists, did ultimately resume the campaign against communalism—and in some cases, with greater vigour—the initial gains on this score very often went in favour of the Jana Sangh.

Thirdly, the very presence of the Jana Sangh in Government along with Left parties had an unwholesome effect on the administration itself; the communal elements in administration were emboldened while the anti-communal among them were confused or distracted.

Finally, after Nehru, with the growth of Hindu communalism, the minority had placed its confidence in the Left forces as its ultimate protector. That confidence got a jolt during the pre-election negotiations among the Opposition parties, but it suffered worse when the Communists and Socialists were found to be sharing Ministerial honours with the Jana Sangh, and again when they were

found to be opposing Dr Zakir Hussain's election as President. The slump in morale that was noticeable, as a result, in the minority community was not confined to the States where such coalitions came into being; it spread among Muslims from Kashmir to Calcutta.

One of the reasons why the Muslim votes have at some places started creeping back into the Congress ballot box in the recent by-elections is the psychological setback following the formation of such coalition Ministries. How far the gains accrued to the Left parties by joining such coalitions offset the losses would perhaps be measured in future: what is relevant to the present discussion is the impact of the development on the mind of the minority community. Now that the period of such honeymoon seems to be coming to an end, it is perhaps worth while examining the balance-sheet—setting the minus points against the plus—of such coalitions. For this has to be assessed against the background of the overall advance of the Jana Sangh on the national scene, and not with a compartmental outlook, judging these developments piecemeal.

On this score, the SSP record

has been the most upsetting for the minority community. The persistence with which one section of the SSP leadership prefers to keep company with, Jana Sangh has certainly not enhanced its standing with the Muslim community nor instilled into them a sense of confidence. It is difficult to believe that the SSP as a whole can allow such a trend to grow, dislinking it from the minority community itself, but there are no indications to suggest that the section of the SSP leadership which prefers to hobnob with the Jana Sangh has immunised itself from the virus of its politics. Secularism does not seem to carry much weight in such socialist pattern.

* * *

TODAY the immediate task that comes up in the struggle for secularism is to guarantee security of life to the minority community. With communal violence on the ascendance, this demands top priority.

To ensure security is essentially the responsibility of the Government. It is in this context that one welcomes Sri Chavan's recent statement underlining the need to combat communalism. But it is no longer

adequate to confine oneself to generalities. Concrete steps need to be taken, and the very first need in this connection is to reorientate the entire administrative machinery itself.

Official records show that of the number of persons killed in communal violence in 1967, 84 per cent were Muslims and 16 per cent were Hindus. A recent Government report says: "What is somewhat unnerving is that the number of deaths in communal riots has tended to increase sharply. Whereas during the entire nine year period from 1954 to 1962, the number of persons who died was 316, in 1967 200 persons have lost their lives."

From this it is clear that the Government does not underestimate the gravity of this menace, nor does it deny that the Muslims are the worst sufferers. And yet one comes across in official documents, all sorts of arithmetical gymnastics with a view to equate the blame between the two communities. There is one theory in official circles that is anxious to show that communal violence has broken out only where Muslims are more

(Continued on Page 36)

It is our age-old policy to build up a united India, united not only politically, but in heart and mind so that the various religious and other groups should co-operate for their mutual advantage and have full opportunities of growth.

Let us examine this question from the practical point of view. Communalism is a narrow and disrupting creed. It is out of place in the modern world. There can be no progress in India if we put up communal barriers amongst ourselves. This is not merely a question of Hindu and Muslim but also of other religious, sectarian and caste groups. Once this dangerous tendency spreads, we do not know where it will end and any dreams that we may have of rapid progress will have to be given up.

We have seen communalism at work both in Pakistan and India in its different forms. It is based on hatred and violence and the narrowest bigotry. It attracts to its fold reactionary and anti-social elements who try to prevent social progress under cover of religion or some form of extreme nationalism, which really can only be applied to one community. Therefore, it is not merely communalism that we have to deal with but social reaction in every form. It is because of this that I have laid great stress on the danger of this vague thinking on this vital issue. There are not many who openly profess unabashed communalism, but there are a large number who unconsciously adopt its modes of thought and action. Some organizations proclaim that they are not communal and yet they have functioned in the narrowest and most dangerous communal way.

Communalism bears a striking resemblance to the various forms of fascism that we have seen in other countries. It is in fact the Indian version of fascism. We know the evils that have flown from fascism. In India we have known also the evils and disasters that have resulted from communal conflict. A combination of these two is thus something that can only bring grave perils and disasters in its train. It is degrading and vulgarizing, it plays upon the basest instincts of man. If India were to listen to its pernicious cry, then indeed India would not only have continuous trouble within her own borders, but would be isolated from the rest of the world which would look down upon her.

— Jawaharlal Nehru, 1951

France: Old and New Myths

MOHIT SEN

THE tremendous mass upheaval in France in May brought terrific cheer to the hearts of all revolutionaries throughout the world. In a flash it revealed the inexhaustible revolutionary potential of the modern, industrial working class. In a flash it showed the profound aggravation of the crisis of the entire world capitalist order. Along with the Vietnam defeat, the gold rush and the "disorder" in the USA itself, the great electoral advance of the Communist Party and the Left in Italy combines with the upheaval in France to signal the beginning of the crash of the postwar capitalist restoration in Western Europe. It heralds the onset of the fourth stage of the general crisis of world capitalism.

This great upheaval, reminding one of the noble traditions of the French working class going back to the 1830s, has blown skyhigh some myths. And various trends try to bring forward new ones to take their place. The entire endeavour is to obscure the role of the working class and, above all, the role of its vanguard—the Communist Party of France. Whether it be the London *Economist*, the inveterate searcher for anti-Soviet "Communism" K. S. Karol of the *New Statesman*, the frustrated intellectuals clustering around Calcutta *Frontier* and the doughty "anti-revisionists" of varying lines, the cry of this whole pack is that the workers are no longer the leading force of revolution and the Communist Party is an anti-revolutionary force.

What are the old myths that are gone forever? First, the myth

that affluence had destroyed all possibility of militant action especially by the workers, that capitalism in its advanced centres had resolved its internal contradictions. The belief was spread that Marx was outmoded in Western Europe, if nowhere else, that the writer of *The Class Struggles in France*, *The 18th Brumaire* and *The Civil War in France*, had been disowned and dismissed by the descendants of the very workers who had brought him to Marxism and whose marvels of heroism had been passionately welcomed by him. Marx is now again in Paris. Indeed he never left it.

The ideologists of the world imperialist system have received a shattering blow. This is, by far, the most important lesson and message of the great upheaval in France. It is this lesson and message that is now sought to be obscured by the paid hacks of the imperialists. And able assistance is being rendered by various Anarchist, Trotskyite and Maoist scribes.

Second, the myth (a counterpart of the first) that the so-called storm centres of world revolution had shifted to the "world village", that is, the continents of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the so-called "thesis" of Lin Piao that first the "world village" had to be liberated, then the liberated "world village" would go on to emancipate via encirclement the "world city". The total irrelevance of the Maoist strategy for the world revolutionary movement has been demonstrated by the French upheaval. Not only irrelevance but downright danger. If the CP of France had

followed Mao, it would have passively waited for revolution to succeed in Asia, Africa and Latin America and for the arrival of the "liberation army". At best it could have kept up its spirits by embellishing some guerilla *foco a la* Debray. The dogmatism of the Maoists has also received a shattering blow. And this, too, is sought to be the fact that some students carried the portraits of Mao and by the slander that the CP of France betrayed the revolution. In this "Left" slander campaign, able assistance is rendered by all the paid hacks of the imperialists who show touching concern for the French revolution and are heartstricken at the "counter revolutionary" role of the French CP.

What are the new myths?

First that the revolutions in the West can no longer be led by the working class since the working class is an integral part of the "industrial society". Revolution must now be made by those who have as yet, no place in the productive system, that is, the students (who have yet to find jobs), the dropouts and various lumpen elements. This refurbished anarchism passes off as the latest wisdom of a certain Marcuse, the latest hero of the anti Marxists.

Are there any grounds for asserting that in the recent French upheaval the working class did not play a leading role? The immediate cause of the "trouble" was the police brutality against the students. The students were agitating around immediate and quite modest demands for changes in the educational system. They were *not* putting forward

any revolutionary programme. They were asking for the equivalent of the economic demands of the working class. They were not even asking for the removal of De Gaulle, let alone the destruction of French capitalism. Their demands were important and their implications pointed certainly in the direction of structural changes. But in themselves they were not revolutionary. Nor were their methods particularly revolutionary. Occupation of university premises and the like are familiar enough phenomena but they are scarcely to be classed as revolutionary.

The students of France deserve to be congratulated for their militancy, for their boldness in raising their own demands and doggedly fighting for them. But revolutionary pathfinders they were not. They had no clear idea of what exactly ailed their country and produced the rotten educational system which they were in revolt against.

Nor was De Gaulle especially worried when the students were the main actors on the stage. What brought him flying back from Rumania was the tremendous action of the French working class, led by the CGT, in which the Communists play a leading role, they swung into action. Admirably combining a charter of their own demands and wrathful condemnation of the police methods being used against the students, they in their ten millions went on general strike and occupied their factories. They came in their millions on to the streets. It was the workers of France who fought for themselves and for their allies, the students. It was not the other way round as the anti-Communists wish to make out. It was the working class that displayed marvels of heroism, solidarity and discipline. It was they who advanced a clearcut charter of demands for changes in the industrial sphere as well as in the Universities. It was they who acted for France as a whole.

The manner in which the workers, under the CGT, looked after their factories, saw to it that vital supplies reached the

people, maintained the medical services, etc., has been virtually blacked out in the capitalist and "Left" press. The orderly manner in which the return to work was made—section by section as their demands were met and the section returning giving the first new daily wage to their brothers still on strike, the 12 million participation in the one-hour strike called for by the CGT to protest at the killing of a Renault worker—has been distorted. Neither on the imperialist TV nor elsewhere are these great deeds and their heroic doers played. Thus, does the capitalist class show clearly who are its unflinching and eternal opponents.

This was working-class action and not the anarchist exhibitionism of a few transient leaders enjoying the glare of publicity provided by the very Establishment they claimed to be totally repudiating. This was the basic force of scientific socialism in turbulent movement and not the scamperings of the Anarchists.

And let it be stressed that this was working class action for structural reforms at the factory level and in the University. It was not yet working class action for a revolutionary overthrow of the existing order.

Second, the new myth is that the workers acted despite the French CP, that they are disowning its leadership and that they are searching for a new leadership.

Let it be remarked at the outset that workers who feel betrayed do not keep quiet. If the workers were for revolution and the CP of France betrayed them, bonfires would have been made of *L'Humanite* and the headquarters of the French CP would have been in shambles. At the very least, violent clashes would have taken place between the disillusioned workers and those still loyal to the French CP. Why has this not happened? Some small sections of the workers may not have agreed with all that the French CP did but to talk of betrayal, of the drift of the workers away from the French CP is utter nonsense.

What was the role of the

French CP in this heroic upheaval? It was the French CP acting through the CGT and on its own that decisively swung the workers into action for themselves and in solidarity with the students. It was the French CP that organised the magnificent May 13 demonstration the like of which even Paris had not seen and which remains unsurpassed. It was the French CP with its roots deep in its own class that was able to give to the upheaval its massive momentum. Thus, what was a student's movement for university reform became transformed into a mighty challenge to the entire Gaullist regime. And it was the French CP, which has its units among the students, which acted as the bridge between the students and the workers.

Not only that it was the French CP that gave the upheaval its political slogan. Obviously, it could not be expected that it would try to outdo Cohn-Bendit and Tariq Ali who wanted "Power to the Soviets and abolition of money"! It advanced the slogan that De Gaulle's personal power regime must go and be replaced by a government of Left and democratic *entente* pledged to the fulfilment of a programme of structural reform. A clearcut and realisable slogan that would (and still might) in its realisation have revolutionised the situation. It was the only slogan that had the chance to secure the acceptance of the Socialists and other vacillating allies. It was the only slogan that had the chance (and still might) neutralise or even split the armed forces. It was the only slogan that could advance the upheaval in the direction of revolution and yet avoid adventurism.

It was the tremendous organisational work and political sagacity of the French CP that has made it the chief enemy of De Gaulle. It is no accident that De Gaulle has clearly taken the Communists as his enemy, as the one force that could lead the movement that would end his regime. All the nonsense that the French CP is in league with De Gaulle has been blown sky-high by his two broadcasts. As

for the various types of Anarchists—from the Trotskyites to the Maoists—they can quite easily be handled.

One thing the French CP did not do. It refused to oblige the Anarchists and allow Indonesia to be repeated in France. It knew that De Gaulle still had large mass support. It knew that the Army could be called in should the CP fall a prey to provocation. It knew that its allies, and even large sections of the workers, wanted an end to Gaullism but certainly not "Soviet power" or "abolition of money". It knew that De Gaulle desperately wanted to isolate it, make it go in for adventurism and then destroy it. If anybody was in league (objectively speaking) with De Gaulle it was the Anarchists.

Indeed, it was the mobilisation of the French CP that compelled De Gaulle to dissolve the Assembly and face the electorate. And it is clear that by calling back to his fold General Salan that De Gaulle wants to consolidate reaction, try to win the elections and even go in for gambles should he feel he is going to lose.

The battle of the French CP against Anarchism is in the best traditions of Marxism. It will be recalled that it was Marx himself who waged implacable struggle against Bakunin. It was Marx who insisted that revolutionary action by the workers as a class and with their allies was the road to emancipation and not the adventurist

actions of individual heroes or a group of heroes. It was Lenin who, told that his brother Alexander (an Anarchist) had been hanged by the Tsar, said that would not be his way. It was Lenin who vanquished the Narodniks; later it was Stalin who had to fight the Anarchism of Trotsky with his "super-revolutionism". And in Spain in the 1930s it was the Trotskyite Poum and the Anarchists who derided the Popular Front Government as reformist, concentrated fire on the Communists and brought grist to the mill of Franco.

Anarchism and reformism are a dialectical unity. They keep springing up since capitalism itself provides an objective basis for them. They aid each other and often enough combine against the creative Communist revolutionaries. Anarchism appeals to the petty-bourgeois students and the inexperienced youth. It feeds upon their healthy anger, sense of adventure and desire to change things overnight. And let it be said it mirrors also the lack of stamina, of aim and the fear of organisation which also characterise the student and the inexperienced youth.

Marxism welcomes the enthusiasm of the youth. It is indeed of the world bringing morrows of song, as Vaillant-Couturier said. But Marxism never flatters the youth nor dishonestly fans their egoism. It offers the students and the youth the most exciting of perspectives but also calls

upon them to change themselves to acquire Bolshevik stamina, to learn to march in time with the firm tread of the iron battalions of the proletariat. Certainly, there are conservative forces in the Marxist movements (the new reformists). But their real enemy, the one who can brush them aside, are not the Anarchists but the creative Communists.

As for the students, they are allies to be won to the positions of the working class and not the vanguards whose tail the workers have to become. But if the workers are not imbued with Marxist consciousness, if they do not act as the leaders of the total emancipation of all oppressed social forces, adventurist Anarchism will have some chance to do damage. The revolutionary appeal of Marxism, its call for a total revolutionary personality, its commitment to science and to constant, profound social change, has to be made widely known. If not Anarchism will exercise for some time its sham glamour. And, of course, get all possible encouragement from the Establishment. After all, Anarchism is the mirror image of the Establishment. It needs the latter as a whipping boy. To end the Establishment would be to eliminate Anarchism, its querulous Siamese-twin.

It is in this spirit of creative Communist revolutionism that the French Communist Party has acted, adding fresh glory to its tremendous record and giving France and the world new hope.

Politics of Power Vacuum

SARAL PATRA

SOME Indian commentators appear to be sorely disappointed with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's recent tour of Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia. They were heartened by her "loud thinking" in Canberra, but felt let down as she did

not follow it up with any definite commitment on devising a new system of security in South-east Asia.

The question arose out of the British decision to "withdraw" from the region by 1971. The resultant "vacuum" has to be filled

in—and its urgency had been recognised by all those "interested" in the problem of security of this region, from Washington to Kuala Lumpur. But, some of the critics of the Indian foreign policy feel that by the inexplicable "retreat" from her "loud thinking",

Smt Gandhi had once again lost for India a golden opportunity to be identified as an Asian entity.

Her "hesitation" to follow the point to its logical conclusion of working out and participating in a "new" security system for the region, it is said, was in line with India's past failures in this respect. Her illustrious father had similarly lost this country's rightful place in South-east Asia by his adherence to an "unworkable" policy of shunning any and every type of mutual defence commitments.

It would be worthwhile noting a few relevant facts before judging the correctness or otherwise of India's stand on regional defence problem.

The much-talked-of British "withdrawal" is a realisation of the incompatibility of following a stiff domestic economic policy with the maintenance of "armies of occupation" in distant corners of the earth. It is not an act of self-abnegation on the part of Britain. At the recent defence talks at the initiative of Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rehman, Britain has assured her massive military presence in the region at a short notice. In fact, she has even promised to give a practical demonstration of her ability to do so in a joint manoeuvre in 1970. Britain has a large financial stake in Malaysia and Singapore. Therefore, the type of "vacuum" feared will not be that complete.

Changed Context

Besides, she has offered Malaysia and Singapore substantial defence facilities and surplus equipment free of cost and also agreed to provide training and specialist personnel on loan whenever necessary.

Yet, the change in the situation after the British "withdrawal" need not be overlooked. The governments of South Asia like Malaysia and Singapore, which have neither the military capability nor the resources to face up to foreign aggression, had felt secure in British presence, in the background of the belligerent posture of China particularly

after her attaining nuclear status. However, the fear of a "vacuum" has been aggravated by the imminence of a US debacle in Vietnam.

The realisation of the approaching debacle has also brought home to the US the need for securing a foothold in some place in South-east Asia other than Vietnam if she were to continue her presence in the region. The US wanted to turn Britain's disability to her advantage. The demand for filling the "vacuum" after British withdrawal was, thus, assiduously fostered. Close on the heels of the announcement of withdrawal by Mr Wilson in January, the United States came out with the statement that it was absolutely necessary to fill the "vacuum", alluding to a possible Chinese take-over as the alternative.

Peking's reaction to the London announcement and Washington statement followed the usual pattern—they were described as a cunning manoeuvre and a fresh "provocation of Anglo-American imperialism". But in Malaysia, Singapore and several other countries of South-east Asia, the question was of national security and how to provide it in the changed context.

Extra-Special Interest

It was then that the Tunku became active in forging a consensus in favour of a collective defence system for the region. The task was made somewhat easier by the end of the confrontation by Indonesia. The Malaysian Premier paid a personal visit to the Indonesia capital to ratify the agreement on mutual friendship and cooperation. An important outcome of this visit was a joint declaration recognising the primary responsibility of the countries of South-east Asia for the security of the region.

This move appeared to have solved the problem. But the developments in Vietnam, despite the Paris peace talks, pointed towards a much bigger conflagration in the Indo-Chinese peninsula that might engulf the entire region. Concern in the countries of the region could not be hidden.

It is in this context that the extra-special interest of Washington to fill the "vacuum" has to be considered. The propaganda about the threat of Chinese expansionism in case of US withdrawal from Vietnam was put on a high key, not forgetting to work up the genuine fears about infiltration and subversive activities by Peking. China's abandonment of the policy of peaceful coexistence and good-neighbourly relations, also made its weighty contribution to rousing such apprehensions. The result was the rush in several countries of South-east Asia to seek military assistance from quarters outside the region, with a dimming faith on a collective security system even.

A Close Look At Peking

The Chinese threat appears to be the main danger to these countries, some of which is genuinely felt, and the rest comes because of accepting Washington propaganda without much scrutiny. Malaysia fears the revival of Communist insurgency which it had been able to suppress in the past with British help. Thailand is already seething with discontent and there have been repeated flare-ups against the oppressive dictatorial regime in Bangkok. Indonesia's General Suharto is single-mindedly crushing any discontent in the country by branding it Chinese Communist inspired.

But a closer look at Peking's actions in the past few years, particularly after the outbreak of the Vietnam war, will show that China is more interested in limiting her activities against the countries of the region to infiltration and political pressure, than mount a massive aggressive action. This line of Chinese tactics is all the more likely because of her present difficulties at home, limited industrial and military potential, and the ever-growing isolation abroad.

According to a report which leaked out in February last, Mao Tse-tung had told President Ho Chi Minh that decisive Chinese military action against US intervention in Vietnam could mature

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Republican Constitution in the Struggle for Socialism

E. M. S. NAMBOODIRIPAD

WE are proud of our Republican Constitution. We consider its adoption by the Constituent Assembly to be a memorable event in the history of our country. That event put an end to the decades of foreign domination as well as several centuries of caste-ridden, conservative, socio-cultural set-up; it inscribed on our banner the inspiring slogans of political liberty, parliamentary democracy, an end to all forms of social inequality, and all-round progress.

2. It is therefore, understandable that anybody who shows disrespect to, or decries, our Constitution is not popular among our people. Critics of the Constitution are faced with questions like: if you see defects and inadequacies in the Constitution, why can you not try to remove them through the processes and methods laid down in the Constitution itself? Why do you decry and show disrespect to that very Constitution which has given you the right to criticise and try to change it? Do you not see that, having adopted a Republican democratic Constitution, our national leadership has gone forward to adopt the programme of establishing a socialist society and to this end evolved the system of planned development of our economy? Is it not therefore the task of those who are interested in further carrying forward the gains secured when the Republican Constitution was adopted by using this very democratic Republican Constitution to make it an instrument of building socialism?

3. These questions are particularly addressed to those of us who believe in the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. We are supposed to be people who have no faith in the democratic process. Loyalty to the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism is supposed to be inconsistent with loyalty to the principles and processes of parliamentary democracy. It is therefore with a sense of gratitude that I am taking this opportunity to explain our attitude to the Republican Constitution of India; how we propose to work within its framework in order to bring about those fundamental socio-economic changes that we are striving to bring about.

4. Let me, at the very outset, make it clear that Marxism-Leninism does not take a rigid or dogmatic stand on the particular mode of bringing about social transformations. No method is excluded, nor

is any laid down as the one and only acceptable method. The only criterion on which Marxism-Leninism bases itself when it selects a particular method for bringing about social transformations is whether it will serve the purpose. If there are more than one method out of which a choice can be made, Marxism-Leninism would consider which will yield results more quickly and less painfully. That was why Marx and Engels who were of the view that State power will have to be seized through the use of force ("force is the midwife of the new society"), nevertheless thought it necessary to draw attention to the possibility that England with its predominantly working class population, its growing organisation of the working class and with its system of parliamentary democracy might be able to pass over from capitalism to socialism through peaceful means. Several years after this Lenin, their loyal disciple who consistently applied their theory of revolution pointed out that, while the possibility of peaceful transformation in England did undoubtedly exist in the days of Marx and Engels, it ceased to exist after the transformation of early ("free") capitalism into monopoly-capitalism. That was again why the Marxists-Leninists of the world did in 1957 and 1960 envisage the possibility of relatively peaceful transformations in several countries since imperialism has got weakened on a world-scale and since indigenous capitalism in individual countries is not so powerful as before. These changes in approach to the possibility or otherwise of peaceful transformation show that the so-called "rigidity" of the Marxists on the question of State power is a figment of imagination of some people. The fact of the matter is that, while Marxism-Leninism will not have that pathetic faith in the efficacy of the bourgeois parliamentary democratic system which was characteristic of social democracy, they are not allergic to the system of parliamentary democracy, as their enemies accuse them of.

5. Let me now come to the specific question of the Republican Constitution of India. On a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the circumstances in which that Constitution came to be adopted and the contents of that Constitution, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) came to the conclusion that its adoption does certainly indicate an advance for our people. Our programme says "Universal adult franchise and Parliament and State Legislatures can serve as instruments of the people in their struggle for demo-

This is the text of Shri Namboodiripad's Founder's Day Address at the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Poona on June 8, 1968.

cracy, for defence of their interests. Although a form of class rule of the bourgeoisie, India's parliamentary system also embodies an advance for the people. It affords certain opportunities to them to defend their interests, intervene in the affairs of the State to a certain extent and mobilise them to carry forward the struggle for peace, democracy and social progress". (Para. 71)

6. Our Party is of the view that, so long as this system continues, it is in the interest of the working class and the working people to so utilise the institutions built up on the basis of this Constitution as to further consolidate and strengthen the struggles of the working people for basic social transformations. That is why the very 7th Congress of the Party which adopted the fundamental programme of the Party, also adopted a resolution on the (then ensuing) 1965 mid-term election in Kerala which called for such a United Front of the Communists, Socialists and other progressive democratic parties, groups and individuals as "will give the State a stable Government which pursues popular democratic policies". That was again why on the eve of the Fourth General Election, the Central Committee of the Party in its election manifesto, gave the slogans of removing the Congress monopoly of power in as many States as possible, improving and increasing the strength of the democratic opposition and above all of the CPI (Marxist) in all the States and at the Centre.

7. While thus considering the adoption of the Republican Constitution as an advance and utilising its provisions for the further strengthening of the working class and democratic movements in the country, the Party has no illusion that the working class and democratic movements will be permitted to use the parliamentary democratic institutions to such an extent, and for such a length of time, that fundamental social transformations can be carried out through the much-talked-of "Parliamentary path." The experience of all countries which have so far adopted the system of bourgeois parliamentary democracy (including the experience of the working of our own Republican Constitution) makes it clear that the ruling classes allow the luxury of parliamentary democracy only so long as their own class interests are not threatened. A study of what happened in European countries after the First World War and what our own Central Congress Government did in those cases where the General Election led to the replacing of Congress by another party or coalition of parties, enabling them to form non-Congress Governments in this or that State exposes the hollowness of the democratic pretensions of the ruling classes. That is why our Party declared in its Programme:

"The threat to the Parliamentary system and to democracy comes not from the working people and the parties which represent their interests. The threat comes from the exploiting classes. It is they who undermine the parliamentary system both from within and without by making it an instrument to advance their narrow interests and repress the toiling masses. When the people begin to use parliamentary institutions for advancing their cause and they fall away from the influence of the reactionary, bourge-

oisie and landlords, these classes do not hesitate to trample underfoot parliamentary democracy as was done in Kerala in 1959. When their interests demand they do not hesitate to replace parliamentary democracy by military dictatorship. It will be a serious error and a dangerous illusion to imagine that our country is free from all such threats. It is of utmost importance that parliamentary and democratic institutions are defended in the interest of the people against such threats, and that such institutions are skilfully utilised in combination with extra-parliamentary activities".

8. Let us analyse the structure of power built up as per the provisions of the Constitution. We find that the repository of executive power is the President of India who not only exercises power "either directly or through officers subordinate to him in accordance with this Constitution" (Art 53 (1)). "The supreme command of the Defence Forces of the Union shall (also) be vested with the President" (Art 53 (2)). The executive power to be exercised by him has, of course, been technically restricted to the field of the 'Union'; the corresponding power in the States is vested in the Governors (Art 154). In reality, however, the Governor is a nominee of the President and holds office during the pleasure of the President (Art 155 and 156 (1)). The President is also the authority who appoints the Judges of the High Court of every State (Art 217). Another important instrument of administrative power (the Public Service Commission of the State who makes appointments for all the top and middle posts of State Services) is also appointed by the Governor (Art 316). Such highly-centralised power vested in the President of the Union and his creatures in the States can very well be so used as to subvert parliamentary democracy behind a facade of "Constitutionalism". This, as is well known, was what happened in several neighbouring countries. That it has not happened in India does not mean that it will not happen here. It only means that the political system in our country has not reached the stage of crisis reached elsewhere.

9. It is, of course, true that the executive power is to be exercised by the President of the Union and by the Governors of States only in their capacities as Constitutional heads of States. The President of the Union shall exercise his functions only with the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers (Art 74(1)); the Governors of States also likewise exercised their functions with the aid and advice of his Council of Ministers (Art 163). The Union and State Councils of Ministers in their turn do under the established convention of parliamentary democracy, hold office only so long as they have the confidence of the Parliament and the State Legislatures respectively. The Constitution, however, provides that they hold office during the "pleasure" of the President and Governor respectively (Articles 75 (2) and 164 (1)). Neither the President nor the Governor is, under normal circumstances, expected to have his "pleasure" in a way different from the fact of the Council of Ministers having the confidence of the Parliament and State Legislature respectively. But in abnormal times, when the political system has reach-

ed a stage of crisis, there can very well be a conflict between the "pleasure" of the Constitutional head and the confidence of the Parliament or the State Legislature respectively.

10. Although vested with extensive despotic powers, it may be said, the President is elected, the electoral college consisting of elected members of both Houses of Parliament and the elected members of the Legislative Assemblies of the State (Art 54). He is also liable under certain conditions to be impeached for violation of the Constitution by either Houses of Parliament (Art 61). This right of the Parliament to punish the President, however, can be negated because, unlike in several other countries having the parliamentary democratic system, our members of Parliament have no immunity from arrest and detention. Whenever there is a political crisis—and it is only in times when there are crises that the Constitution breaks down—sufficient number of members of Parliament can be put behind the bars. That this is not a figment of the imagination but can very well become a reality can be seen from two facts. Firstly, several members of Parliament were detained without trial under the Defence of India Rules in 1962-63 and 1964-65. Secondly, 29 members of the State Legislature elected in Kerala in the 1965 midterm election, belonging to the Party that came out as the biggest single party, was used by the Governor of that State to report to the President that no party is in a position to form a Government; this led to the dissolution of the Legislature even before the elected members took their oath of office. If this could be done to a sufficient number of members of a State Legislature in a time of crisis for this particular State, how can it be assumed that it will not happen at the Centre when the Centre itself is faced with a similar crisis?

11. Crucial to the discussion of the democratic character of the Republican Constitution, the guarantees that it provides for the peaceful transition from a socio-economic system based on landlord-capitalist exploitation to a socialist system, is the way in which our political system is enveloped by a growing crisis. That such a crisis is, in fact, developing will not be denied by any one at least after the Fourth General Election. The crisis had, in reality, started developing as early as in 1952. In three States, the Congress was reduced to a minority in the respective State Legislatures in 1952, The Central Government and the Party that leads it however used the institutions of the Rajpramukh and the Governor in those States to prevent the formation of non-Congress Governments. That situation was changed slightly in favour of the Congress in subsequent years. But still the Congress could not prevent the formation of a non-Congress Government in Kerala in 1957. Here again, the executive power vested in the President was used in order to dismiss that non-Congress Government. It was only after the Third General Election that the Congress could form its own Government not only at the Centre but in all the States. This, however, was followed by the Fourth General Election when there was a veritable landslide against the Congress. Once again, therefore, the party in power at the Centre used its

authority to get as many non-Congress Governments as possible dismissed. The method adopted for this in West Bengal was denounced by such an august body as the All-India Speakers' conference, presided over by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.

12. Seen against this background, the growing crisis of confidence in the leadership of the Central Government; the unconcealed intrigues resorted to by various groups within the ruling party, raise the ominous question; what will happen to the Centre if and when a group of Congress M.Ps. defect to the Opposition as happened in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh in March and April 1967? Again, supposing that in the Fifth General Election the Congress is reduced to a minority in Parliament, is it unimaginable that what was done in 1952, in 1957-59 and 1967-68 in those States where the Congress was reduced to a minority in the Legislature will not be done at the Centre? If that happens to the Centre, will that be very far from a fulfilled military dictatorship?

13. If we are to have the proper understanding of the essence of the crisis, the political aspects of which were briefly outlined above, we should go a little deeper into the socio-economic factors leading to this crisis. For, only a superficial observer of the political scene in our country can look upon these manifestations of the political crisis as passing phenomena. Any objective, truthful study of the situation will reveal that the political crisis is a manifestation of the deep gulf that separates the expectations of the people when the country attained independence and their experience of what actually happened in the post-independence years. The Preamble of the Constitution which gave expression to the solemn resolve of the Constitution-framers to secure to all Indian citizens "(a) justice, social, economic and political; (b) liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; (c) equality of status and opportunity" is an expression of the expectations with which the people welcomed the Republican Constitution of India. The Fundamental Rights embodied in Part III and the Directive Principles of State Policy laid down in Part IV of the Constitution also give expression to these expectations of the people. These are undoubtedly noble declarations. They inspire every Indian citizen with the idea that he or she belongs to a country which is determined to take its place among the most advanced freedom-loving and democratic countries in the world.

14. As opposed to this however is the living experience of the people. Everyone of the fundamental rights inscribed on the banner of the Republic is violated—except of course the right to property. Not the property of the small and medium-size cultivator or artisan who is steadily being pauperised, and thrown into the ranks of the unemployed and employment-seeking millions. It is the right to property of the big landlords and of the growing sections of monopoly capitalists that is protected and in protecting which the Government attacks the mass of the working people. The result is that the people are getting rapidly disillusioned and are therefore losing faith in the Congress and its declaration of building a new India on the foundations of democratic socialism.

It is this loss of faith in the Congress that is reflected in the waning prestige and power of the Congress—a process which cannot be reversed, but will, on the other hand, grow from year to year unless the basic policies are changed.

15. Nobody disputes the wide gulf between the expectations with which the people greeted the attainment of Independence in 1947 and their subsequent experience. It is recognised even by the leaders of the ruling Party who blame it on the fact that the correct policies laid down by them have not been properly implemented. Opposition parties, on the other hand, point out that the policies themselves are wrong. Among the opposition parties themselves, there are two schools of thought; one, which may be called Left Opposition, is of the opinion that the policies are calculated to serve the interests of landlords and capitalists and opposed to the interests of the working people. The second consists of Parties of the Right Opposition who think that the ruling party is adopting policies which are too radical, too socialistic and doctrinaire. Both sections of the Opposition, however, plead for a radical change of policies. According to them, change of policies is the only way in which the growing discontent of the people can be removed and the country march along the path of progress.

16. There are, at the same time, some—our Party is one of them—who hold the view that neither the inadequate implementation of accepted policies (conceded by the ruling Party) nor the incorrect policies (pointed out by the Opposition) fully explain the divergence between the people's early expectations and their subsequent experience. According to us, this is inherent in the very State structure built up under the Constitution. Even the most radical reversal of the policies—the adoption of the most progressive, anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and anti-monopoly policies—would not help the solution of the problem unless it is accompanied by a fundamental recasting of the State structure built under the Constitution. As a matter of fact, the very process of laying down and implementing radical progressive policies would be thwarted by the various checks built into the framework of the Constitution. Recall the fate of the various land reform measures which the Congress Governments had to push through the various Legislatures. These are not radical, not to speak of revolutionary, measures. They fall far short of even the measures introduced by the American Occupation Regime in Japan. Yet, within a year of the coming into force of our Constitution, the Parliament had to amend a section of Article 31 in order to give protection to certain land reform legislations (Art 31 A). This amendment had to be followed by other amendments to the Constitution, all of which were calculated to facilitate the implementation of various agrarian reform legislations. This process has at last reached a stage when the legality and constitutionality of this process of amending Part III of the Constitution in order to facilitate progressive legislation has been questioned; the well-known majority judgement of the Supreme Court, headed by former Chief Justice Subba Rao, rejects the right of Parliament to get such amending

legislations pushed through. If this is the fate of legislative measures which can in no way be considered radical or revolutionary, it is obvious that the radical policies advocated by the parties of the Left Opposition would meet with still more serious obstacles built into the Constitution.

17. Compare, for instance, Part III and Part IV of the Constitution: The former deals with Fundamental Rights while the latter relates to what are called Directive Principles of State policy. It is in the latter that the essentials of what is known as the concept of welfare State are spelt out. One article included in that Part commits the States to "strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of the national life" (Art 38). Still another Article directs the State to see that "the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good" (Art 39 (b)); that "the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment" (Art 39 (c)); there is equal pay for equal work for both men and women" (Art 39 (d) and so on. Among the other rights of the people which the State has been directed to "make effective provision for" are "securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement" (Art 41); "just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief" (Art 42); "a living wage, conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life and full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities" (Art 43) and so on. These undoubtedly express the hopes and expectations with which our people greeted the new independent India. Before laying down these Directive Principles of State policy, however, the Constitution-makers make it clear that "the provisions contained in this Part shall not be enforceable by any court" (Art 37). They have thus been reduced to noble declarations with no sanction behind them.

18. As opposed to this is Part III on Fundamental Rights which are enforceable by the Judiciary. Art 32 lays down the procedure for moving the Supreme Court and the court examining the cases of violation of Fundamental Rights. It is very significant that the most crucial right embodied in this Part of the Constitution is the Right to Property. It was in relation to this that several cases came before the Supreme Court which gave its judgement against the very moderate social reform measures introduced by the Congress Government. It is again in relation to this that the well-known Subba Rao judgement came to the conclusion that even Parliament has no right to so alter the Fundamental Rights provisions in the Constitution as to take away the Right to Property. It is obvious that, so long as this provision continues to remain in the Constitution, the courts will strike down each and every radical legislation. It is also obvious that, so long as the Subba Rao judgement

(Continued on Page 28)

Vindhyas of Ignorance Must Be Crossed

KHWAJA AHMAD ABBAS

I remember a conversation I had some years ago with a student of History of a North Indian University. The talk somehow drifted to Indian literatures and then to poetry in the Indian languages. He asserted that great poetry was to be found only in Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu and in the Bengali of Tagore.

"The Madrasis may be good stenographers", he said, "but poetry is not in their line."

I asked him if he had heard of the poet Subramaniam Bharati. He hadn't.

I asked him if he had heard of Vallathol. He vaguely remembered that Vallathol had something to do with "some sort of Madras dancing."

I asked him if he knew of a world-famous novel called *Chhemeen* by a writer named Thakazhi. He said he had not heard of it.

He went on to confess that he had never heard of any great novel or poetry written in the "Madras" language.

"Madrasis" Speak Madrasi!

I told him there was no such language as "Madrasi".

He asked me: "What do you mean? After all, what language do they speak in Madras presidency if it is not *Madrasi*"? (It was before the formation of Andhra and Kerala states).

I took the liberty of informing him that the major languages spoken in the South were Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kanarese.

That, he admitted, was news to him. He had always imagined the "Madrasis" all spoke "Madrasi".

This was some years ago but the situation is not very different even today.

This graduate was not more ignorant about South India than most North Indians are. The majority of people in UP and Punjab not only do not know that there is no such language as "Madrasi" but they have an undisguised superiority complex where South India is concerned. The Vindhyas, they seem to feel, constitute the frontiers of Aryan culture and civilization—beyond lies the benighted land of the Dark Dravidians! I am not sure about the origin of this attitude towards the South—it might be as old as the Aryan invasion or as recent as the

establishment of the Indian Capital in Delhi, and the consequent concentration of political prestige and power in North India. It is, however, but one aspect of the widespread ignorance about the culture of our own country.

Shakespeare and Kalidasa

Thanks to English education, even the average Indian intellectual knows little about indigenous arts and literatures. Strangely enough, he knows more about Shakespeare than Kalidasa, more about Tennyson than about Tulsidas, more about the French impressionists than the painters of Ajanta, more about Epstein than about the sculptures of Ellora, more about Waltz and Tango than about *Kathakali* and *Bharata Natyam*.

Thousands of highly educated North Indians do not know the first thing about *Kathakali* or *Bharata Natyam*, about Bharati or Vallathol, about the temple architecture of Madura and Mahabalipuram, about M.S. Subbalakshmi or Rukmini Arundale. They have no idea whatever that a rich literature—both classical and modern—exists in both Tamil and Telugu, that there is a vigorous short story tradition in Malayalam, that the most popular literary magazines with the largest circulation of all the journals in the Indian languages are published in Tamil, that dynamic and revolutionary plays and poetry are being written in Telugu and Malayalam. They don't know that the South Indian's taste for classical music is so developed that a single concert of M. S. Subbalakshmi can bring in half a lakh of rupees and that the great-hearted artiste can give it all away to a charity! They don't know that in the South almost everyone is familiar with classical music and classical dancing. They don't know that the significant social plays are performed in Malayalam by Thopil Bhasi and K. P. A. C. And when I tell them that in the matter of art appreciation the average South Indian is far more cultured than his North Indian brother, they refuse to believe me.

Insular South Indians

As for the South Indians, on their part many of them, too, are insular and complacent and perhaps, as ignorant about the North. I am quite sure tens of thousands of educated South Indians have not heard of Ghalib and Iqbal, Mohan Singh and Amrita Pritam, Premchand and Sumitranandan Panth,

This article is based on the inaugural address delivered recently at the Trichinopoly session of the Tamilnad Federation of Art and Literature.

Josh and Krishenchander, Ismat Chughtai and Rajinder Singh Bedi. In the Universities of Moscow and Leningrad and even in American Universities you can meet boys and girls who are studying the Punjabi language and literature. But you will not find a student of Punjabi language in the University of Madras. Many South Indians don't even seem to be aware that there is a rich literature in Punjabi. I say this, however, not as complaint or criticism but only to emphasize the need for wider, more intimate cultural contacts between the North and the South.

We have now many organizations dedicated to the laudable purpose of international cultural contacts for instance, Indo-Soviet Cultural Society and the Indo-Arab Friendship Association. Surely we also need a movement to foster cultural contacts and understanding between the different linguistic and cultural regions of India. What about a South-North Cultural Society?

The North-South alienation was understandable in the dim past when the Vindhya was a formidable barrier. The roads and railways brought the North and the South together and out of the freedom struggle evolved political cohesion which was symbolised in the persons of the South Indian Rajagopalachari and the North Indian Nehru, as the first Governor General and Prime Minister of free India. The planes now fly over the Vindhya: One can leave Delhi after morning tea and have breakfast in Madras! The new economic life is creating more South-North contacts. There are hundreds of South Indians working on the Bhakra Nangal dam project in the Punjab, even as Punjabis can be found living and working as far South as Trivandrum.

But, culturally, the Vindhya remain, they are more than a physical barrier. From both the sides we have to cross the Vindhya of isolation and complacency, of ignorance and prejudice. The North and South must get acquainted.

"All Folk are My Friends"

"Within the four seas, all men are brothers" proclaimed the ancient wisdom of China, but the same ideal has been expressed better in the two-thousand-year old Tamil proverb *Yadom Oore Yavaroom Ke-lir*—The world is my village and all folk are my friends!

It is a sign of the times in which we live that many of us, living in different parts of India, have chosen to forget the broad humanistic principles of our ancient cultures, and only retained the external symbols that divide man from man. No one can point the finger of accusation at another—let him cast the first stone who has not sinned himself—here all are tainted with the mark of Cain—and the blood that drips from my hands is the blood of my brother. The Punjabis have disowned the message of love of Waris Shah's *Heer*; the Sikhs have ignored the tolerant faith of the great Guru Nanak; the Muslims have turned their face away from the humanism and universality of Islam; the Pandits of Varanasi have forgotten the gentle philosophy of Kabir; who responds to the beauty and grace of Tagore's poetry in Bengal?; the noble and divine *abhangas* of Tukaram sound hollow in Maharashtra; the lofty idealism of Meghani's poetry is wasted in Gujarat.....

I can go on and on, but the point I wish to make is that everywhere the voice of truth, the voice of love, the voice of Humanity, is drowned in the roar of the fanatical demagogue. Is it any wonder that in Tamilnad, too—in the homeland of the great Tamil language and literature, and Tamil culture—where the faith and devotion of man has raised lofty monuments to God which are the shrines visited by the devout from every part of the country—*Yadom Oore Yavaroom Ke-lir* should remain a mere slogan—a phrase to be emblazoned on postage-stamps—while thoughtless words of demagogues and reckless deeds of youthful firebrands, with a narrow conception of love for their language, should negate the very essence of the universal truth implicit in this exquisite expression of man's kinship with man.

Gautama and Sankara

This concept of kinship—these ties of humanity and brotherhood—that unite the Indian family as a part of the human family are no mere empty sentimentality and airy philosophizing.

There is a deep, earthy base for the ultimate ideal of human brotherhood, as there is a deep and earthy base for the idea of Indian unity. It has been variously expressed, at different times in our long history. It was expressed by the great soul of Gautam the Buddha whose very wandering footsteps—and the wandering footsteps of his disciples—traced the universal dimensions of the Indian spirit, which could not be confined within the narrow borders of kingdoms and provinces.

It was again emphasized by the Sankara—that strangely gifted young man from the extreme South—whose vision could encompass the *Char Dham*—the four holy places—only one of them in the South at Rameswaram, the other in the extreme North at Badrinath amidst the snow-bound Himalayas, one in the east at Jagannath Puri, and the fourth on the West coast at Dwarka. Who will efface from our racial memory, the footprints of the Buddha and the Sankara who criss-crossed the country from end to end, regardless of the frontiers of kingdoms and empires, using not only Sanskrit, but all the advanced languages, and the proletarian Prakrit dialects, to spread the gospel of Truth.

Three Simple Words

But, to my mind, this idea is expressed in three simple words which epitomize the fundamentals of human existence—these are the very foundations of the edifice of Indian unity. These three words are common, or have become common, to all the languages of India. They are:

Anna—or *Annam*—denoting food, sustenance, the daily bread for which men must toil—

Soundarya—or *Sundaram*—denoting Beauty, in Life as in Art, the search for which has given birth to all the different theories of Art and Aesthetics—The third word is *Inqilab*—*Kranti*—Revolution—the right of human beings to drastically change the existing political, social or economic order. It is an Arabic word in its origin, but with the addition of a Persian phrase—*Zindabad*—**INQILAB ZINDABAD**—Long Live Revolution!—when it was uttered by the revolutionary and martyr, Bhagat

Singh, it was echoed from one end of the country to the other. Since then it has been the battle-cry of our freedom movement, and of the class struggle for the rights of the toiling masses for bread and for dignity. *Inqilab Zindabad*—the very reiteration of the phrase sends a tingle of revolutionary excitement down our spines.

Three words — *Anna* — *Soundarya* — *Inqilab* — Bread, Beauty and Revolution—not only three words but three concepts—three fundamentals of life—common to all the different languages and people of India and, therefore, a three-fold bond that unites the people of India—economically, culturally and politically!

All the struggles of the Indian people, as of other people, are the struggles for the fulfilment of these three basic human hungers—the hunger of the body for bread, three measures of rice, and the economic security that it denotes; the hunger of the soul for Beauty and Truth and Culture, Literature and the Arts; and the collective hunger or urge of the Indian ethos to do what Omar Khayyam had already visualized in a poet's preview of the *conspiracy* for revolution:

*Ah, Love! Could thou and I with Fate conspire,
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!*

Challenge of History

This, then, is not only an eleventh-century poet's challenge to his brother poets and litterateurs and artists, but the challenge of Life itself—the challenge of History. Who will take up this challenge but the writers and poets, the artists and the intellectuals, "the engineers of the human soul" as they have been called; for other engineers may build mighty dams and beautiful bridges, but they reconstruct and repair the human personality, building dams of culture and the arts to prevent the erosion of the human spirit by floods of fanaticism, jingoism, unreason and mass hysteria; building bridges of understanding between peoples and peoples, and between one individual and another individual, so that nobody has to take his own life out of the frustrated feeling that he is an island of loneliness and alienation in a cruel and pitiless world? Who else but writers and artistes?

Indian writers and artistes, with their tradition of direct participation in the freedom struggle, with the tradition of the progressive Writers' Association and the Indian People's Theatre, don't have to be persuaded that collective action in the interests of the people, and literary creation are not incompatible. But these days there is among intellectuals and artists a tendency and a mood of isolation. "Back to the Ivory Tower"—that is what many, out of frustration, are feeling, if not saying. "What can the writers do when even the politicians have failed?" Many of these are taking refuge in foreign "isms" of escape and "coteries" of isolation—you hear of existentialism, expressionism, impressionism, New poetry, No-Novels, Self-expression of the writer's or artist's ego and not communication of ideas from the writer to the reader, or the artist and the viewer

of art.

To Reveal is to Fight

But the prophet of existentialism Jean Paul Sartre is today at the barricades of Paris defending the rights of students and workers. The great New Wave film-makers of France are in the forefront of their people's battalions. They have abandoned the Cannes Film Festival, got it closed down, and have rushed to Paris to be with their people. Are we more devoted to art and aesthetics than Sartre, Goddard and Alais Resnais?

The writer does not necessarily take a gun—though sometimes he takes up that, too, to defend freedom, as writers from all over the world did in Spain. The writer's own domain of work is no less important than fighting at the barricades. "Is it so difficult to see," as Sartre puts it, "that the writer is a man who has chosen a certain method which we may call *action by disclosure*... The engaged writer knows that words are *action*. He knows that to reveal is to change and that one can only reveal by planning to change. The committed writer has given up the dream of giving an impartial picture of society and the human condition..... It is in love, in hate, in anger, in hope, in despair, that man and the world reveal themselves in the truth of literature."

Truth Comes First

To Sartre's exhortation to the writers "*to reveal*" I would add that the writer's and artist's mission should be "*to reveal and to heal*"

—to reveal the ugliness, the sordidness, the inequity and injustice rampant in the world and by revealing, by their "*action by exposure*", to change the human condition—

—but also "*to heal*" the wounds of the human spirit, the cancer of hate and the hysteria of fanaticism in the minds of men, the corroding tuberculosis of inertia, fatalism, frustration, and to fill the human heart with hope, the human mind with reason, and to inspire men to act in unity and in faith, for their own redemption and the redemption of their people, the people of *Tamilnad*, of *India*, and of the *entire humanity*.

The most ancient Indian definition of art—it also applies to literature—is that it should be *Satyam*, *Shivam*, *Sundaram*—Art must be Truthful, Eternal, Beautiful! But, remember, Truth comes first—Beauty comes last.

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Indian Planning and its Idea of Development

KAMAL NAYAN KABRA

AMID the profuse verbiage surrounding the objectives pursued by the Indian Five Year Plans, one thing stands out quite clearly. While few would deny that Indian Planning was aimed at economic development, nowhere have our planners made clear their idea of development, except vague generalities. Thus the content of 'economic development' pursued by Indian planners has to be inferred from the reality of planning experience we have accumulated over the past eighteen years.

A good deal of writing is available about the theoretical basis of Indian plans. These writings, in effect, are concerned with the mechanism of bringing about sustained increments in our net national product. These theoretical bases, popularly known as models of India's Five Year Plans, are exercises aiming at finding out the way in which macro variables should be manipulated so that, given the constraints like the time horizon, the structural basis of the economy, and socio-political considerations, net national product increases at the maximum speed. This is the broad nature of the Harrod-Domar and Feldman-Mahalanobis type of exercise which Indian planners undertook. These models and their later refinements in the form of multi-sectoral exercises with an increasingly finer degree of disaggregation embody a particular concept of economic development. One might safely venture to assume that, at least, implicitly Indian

Planners decided to subscribe to this particular notion of economic development.

What is this concept of economic development? It is a very simple one, indeed. Economic development and economic growth are taken as interchangeable concepts referring to a state of sustained and fairly substantial increases in net national product. This, it seems, is also the view taken by our planners.

Model builders, it must be said in fairness, operate at a highly abstract level. The essence of model building consists in a process of successive abstractions till the strategic variables are pinned down and their mutual relations are established. This is at the theoretical level. The question is: could planners dealing with a concrete situation, with all its complexities, permit themselves of similar latitude and attempt such a degree of abstraction? This is important. The shortcomings of this narrow, statistical view of economic development are too well known and widely admitted.

When process of development (in the sense of increments in national income) is inaugurated, not only does national income go up, but many structural changes also take place. Some of these changes are consciously planned and brought about. For example, the relative increase in the size of the industrial and tertiary sectors at the cost of the primary sector, the expansion of the heavy and basic industries complex, technical changes in a number of important lines of production etc. have been the ingredient elements of our plans. So that along with increases in national income, a number of structural changes also take place.

It is unlikely that these processes could take place without altering the distribution of economic power and wealth in the economy. Hence sustained increases in national income represent an economy in ferment at a number of fronts and signify an economy undergoing transformation.

No one can deny that these winds of changes have not been sweeping across the Indian nation. It is also equally difficult to gainsay the strategic role that planning has played in bringing about these transformations. However, those who dramatise the contrast between the stagnant Indian economy of the pre-plan era and the dynamism-surcharged Indian economy of the post-planning era could easily go into journalistic-propagandistic trance about this phenomenon.

On the other hand, those who see the process of development against the background of our tremendous potential, still more tremendous compulsions of our requirements and the worsening temporal aspects could easily get disheartened and disillusioned with all this fanfare of planning. If they also happen to notice the worsening distortions and evaporating human values entailed by the process of development in our economy, nothing short of a total scrapping of this apparatus and pretence of planning could bring back a sense of satisfaction to them. A total and complete restructuring of the whole affair becomes their starting point.

In both the cases, some important considerations go unnoticed. The Fourth Five Year Plan fails to enthuse anyone. A stage has come when planning does not seem to open any new vista.

The author is Lecturer in Economics, Ramjas College, University of Delhi.

Apart from repeating the same old story about a promised 5 to 6 percent rate of growth (which invariably falls short in reality) some increase in social services and employment (which only underlines the unfilled gap) what the Fourth Plan has to promise is an accent of stability. Prof Gadgil has made out a "progressive" case for stability by arguing that even growth prospects are threatened without stability. This undoubtedly valid argument, one suspects, has acquired its appeal owing to the fiasco that the Third Plan was and the way the consequent instability gave a big jolt to the fabric of the status quo. So the present scene is such that planning appears to people as a dull ritual, a fading fancy of crystal-gazing technocracy.

No Alternative Approaches

No fresh initiative, no new formulation, no challenging fervour is in sight. The debate about planning has started looking frivolous and futile. Only a total acceptance or total rejection is in view. In both the cases, it is ignored that tremendous things are at stake. The very survival as a healthy nation is in question.

I suggest that a very significant factor responsible for this state of affairs is the non-availability of concrete, theoretically sound, alternative approaches. The Left, giving a high priority to these questions, is not presenting people with any alternative approaches. They challenge and deride the outcome of present planning, they quite effectively demonstrate the hollowness of this plan-approach, but they do not venture to spell out how it could be replaced by something new and what that new could be.

One of the things that went wrong with the current style of planning is its understanding of the notion of development. As mentioned, the concept of development underlying the "models of growth" was, at least tacitly accepted by our planners. An admittedly partial, incomplete and inadequate concept of economic development which was accepted by the theorists of the models primarily for analytical convenience,

is rather strangely and unfortunately accepted by our planners for practical policy purposes.

The plans do mention a number of other objectives besides a target rate of growth of national income. Important among these are objectives relating to the relative priorities of the different sectors and employment targets. There is also inserted an objective regarding prevention of concentration of economic power and wealth. Attempts aimed at reducing the inequalities of income and wealth are promised. Now, setting these objectives besides a target rate of growth of national income, does not imply a notion of development different from the quantitative one of national income increments.

An improvement in the distribution of income and wealth, an expansion of job opportunities etc. are not taken as indices of development. These objectives, at their best, represent an attempt to give a certain direction to the changes which would necessarily be taking place along with increases in national income. It is the primary emphasis given to an increase in total and per capita national income which has been the corner-stone of development policy under the aegis of planning.

Dual Economy

In the context of the situation prevailing in India, this concept led to some grave consequences. Ours is a sort of a dual economy, characterised by the co-existence of a monetised, organised sector along with a non-monetised, unorganised sector. It is among the first propositions in any textbook exposition of national income that the contribution of the non-monetised sector does not get adequately and properly represented in national income accounting. Though planners aim at ending this quality, the non-monetised sector is still fairly extensive. In such a context, planning aimed at income expansion could easily worsen the relative position of people in the non-monetised sector and they are those who are already worse off and suffer a number of disabilities.

Most important of all, in a mixed though basically private-

enterprise economy, income-expansionist planning is bound to result in a greater concentration of income and wealth. Since the concept of development runs in terms of income expansion, the criteria for choosing between alternative courses of action get biased toward the course of action resulting in a greater net increase in income. It could easily be demonstrated that this need not be the socially-optimum course of action. In the light of the professed objectives of our planners, this approach becomes still more indefensible.

Ultimate Test

The basic rationale of embarking on a course of development planning in India is our abysmal poverty. This poverty results, for a great mass of our population, in a sub-human standard of living. It is from this debasement of human dignity owing to the sub-human standards of living in our country that the urge for vigorous development planning arises. Hence the ultimate test for judging the worthwhileness of our development efforts lies in our ability to ameliorate the living standards of these masses.

With our highly skewed distribution of income and wealth, the standard of living for the any higher and upper middle income strata is such that even with our current plan targets achieving hundred percent, it would take the masses centuries to approach this standard of living. This standard of living of the privileged few is broadly at par with the highest of standards prevailing anywhere in the world. The appeal and meaning of development planning for these sections would primarily seem to lie in the dizzy heights of economic power and prestige that their "entrepreneurial" and professional excellence could bring about. Even the far more modest standard of the middle-income groups is so high above that of the great mass of the Indian people that our planning would not, on the best of assumptions, be in a position to approach it for generations to come. As such, its promise fails to warm up these major sections of our society to come to its defence. In this con-

text, the aggregate and average income-based development planning, which in our institutional setting gives more to those who happen to have a good deal already, could not be considered a national enterprise of uplifting the masses. The impressive array of statistics of the increasing production of different foodcrops, cloth, sugar, paper, footwear, utensils, oils, cement, furniture, building materials, etc., and a whole lot of new items of finer and refined consumption, in this context, fail to represent economic development, if this process first does not create purchasing power in the hands of those whose standard of living is the lowest. Economic development, then, should mean an increasingly better standard of living for that major section of the population which stands in the most dire need of obtaining all these increases in production.

An explicit recognition of this meaning of economic development (an increasingly better standard of living for the great mass of underfed, poorly clad, ill-housed and barely subsisting people and within the context of a clearly specified time-horizon of planning) would imply great many changes in the planning theory and practice in India.

No doubt, this is a value-loaded view of the development pro-

cess. However it would be foolhardy to suggest that the earlier concept was a positive, value-free category. That too is a value-loaded concept, partisan in favour of the *status quo*.

It would be misleading to construe this view of economic development to be biased towards short-run consumption at the cost of investment and long-run considerations. What it pleads for is not a greater consumption-oriented economic development, but simply a greater concern for the betterment of the living conditions of the lower strata of society, out of whatever aggregate level of consumption is decided upon for the economy as a whole. It is all for a very high marginal and average rate of saving, more extensive and higher rate of growth of the machine-making and basic capital goods industries.

Nothing is lost by way of statistical measureability through this change, though the complexities of measurement increase. Then, this view of development does not mean that increase in national income is unimportant and inconsequential. Only that the physical composition (the assortment) of this increased income, its destination and relative urgency from the point of view of the different income-groups that are going to absorb this increased flow of goods and services, and

the ones that are going to do without these and the impact of these choices on the temporal and spatial aspects of the development process also find pointing placing as indices of economic development.

This change in the notion of development, if adopted by our planners would also significantly change the planners' criteria in decision-making. For example, the long-standing promise of planning for providing a national minimum of living standard to every citizen of the land would not stand any dilly-dallying. This programme of providing a minimum standard of living to the people should be placed at the very centre of the development process.

The deceptive statistical concept of per capita income level (with its proverbial capacity for concealing more than what it reveals) must be replaced by a concrete target about the standard of living for the people, and this latter should stand at the centre of the planning process. The implications of this change, if consistently worked out, could affect the entire planning perspective. A socially-oriented planning for development cannot for long continue with the gospel of aggregate output divorced from consideration of standard of living for the major sections of society.

Whither Nagaland?—IV

PANNALAL DAS GUPTA

THE negotiations the Federal Naga leaders were conducting with the present leaders of the Government of India, will have to be resumed, temporarily sus-

The previous instalments of this report appeared in Mainstream, June 1, 8, and 15, 1968.

pended though they are now. Even now they are maintaining contact with the GOI. The cease-fire agreement, by itself, is a relationship that necessitates keeping such contacts.

On the other hand, uncertainty and change mark the political situation in the country. Some non-Congress Govern-

ments are already in power in some States and it is not unlikely that the Congress will lose its monopoly of power at the Centre in the next General Election. Some other party or a coalition of parties may come to power at the Centre. The rebel Nagas will then have to conduct negotiations with the new leader-

ship.

Keeping this possibility in view, I posed a question to several Federal Naga leaders: what did they expect of a new leadership that might eventually replace the Congress? What kind of demands would they place before the new leaders? Would the negotiations with the newcomers be easier or more difficult than they were with the Congress? Was it not necessary to see to it that the successors in power were helpful to them (the Federal side), or, at least, not worse than the Congress leaders? The rebel leaders, I found, were not prepared to answer these questions. It means they have not thought about these matters.

They make no distinction between the people and the Government of India; both are same to them. Not that they do not know there are many non-Congress parties in India and that some of these consider themselves revolutionaries. Perhaps they believe that all Indian political parties—whether Congress or Swatantra, Socialist or Communist, Marxist Communist or Revolutionary Communist—are primarily Indians and [therefore so far as the Naga question is concerned, they make no difference to the Nagas. They seem to have taken it for granted that they can expect no change of attitude on the part of any Indian party towards them. To this, a counter-question can be posed: are all the Nagas one and the same, do not a group of Nagas consider themselves Indians and are not they running a government under the Indian Constitution? The Nagas are not a homogenous entity, nor are the Indians.

And then, there are parties and groups in India today who talk of getting out of the country. The DMK of the South once raised the slogan of secession, though it has since given up that slogan. Sri Rajagopalachari, the Swatantra leader, has gone on record that he is prepared to accept the independence of Nagaland.

The secessionist slogan has only one political meaning, namely, that the constituent States

and the nationalities and tribes do not feel the glow of *Swaraj*, do not feel themselves masters of their own houses under the Constitution that has concentrated power in the hands of the Centre. The same is true of the Federal Nagas. There should, therefore, be a re-examination of our Constitution. The biggest and most complicated political question facing us is whether national unity can be strengthened by further centralization of power or through its devolution, whether more power should be vested in the Centre or whether the States should be given more autonomy. The question is being raised in different quarters and in different forms. It affects not only the Nagas but the whole country. Why should then the Nagas look upon it as an exclusive problem for themselves?

Two Trends

There are perhaps two trends in India today, represented by two sets of leaders. One, [the Central or Indian leadership, stands for centralization, while the other, the rebel Naga leadership, stands for secession from India and sovereignty for each nationality or tribe. Local—and parochial—movements like “Assam for Assamese” or “Tamilnad for Tamils” or “Punjab for Punjabis” as well as chauvinistic groups like the MNF, Shiv Sena or Lachit Sena are, in a sense, followers of the Nagas, with this difference that they are not prepared to go as far as the Nagas want to. If, however, they do not get what they want, or their comparatively moderate demands are not met in time, extremist elements appear who believe that “the Naga path is our path.”

The situation is further aggravated by the fact that even the moderates in the States and among the nationalities and tribes have become convinced that without resorting to a revolt, adequate financial assistance cannot be secured from the Centre, nor its attention drawn and therefore unless there is a group of extremists to reinforce their demands, they cannot hope to get what they are entitled to.

They point out that because

of the presence of the rebel Nagas the Government of India is spending twenty crore rupees in Nagaland annually, whereas those who have not rebelled get a raw deal. In other words, revolt is rewarding. To be sure, such revolts (!) are often made not for getting independence but for getting more money from the Centre, although the objectives are contradictory. If the aim of the revolt is to force the Central Government to give greater financial assistance, then such revolts end in greater economic dependence on the Centre. Ultimately this dependence curbs their freedom and authority. If the States cannot do without Central assistance, cannot run their developmental activities, how do they hope to free themselves from the grip of the Centre? Does it make them more free or more dependent?

In this connexion, a significant “small thing” may be mentioned. The Nagas (and all newly-awakened tribes) have not yet got into the habit of saving. Whoever gets whatever part of the crores of rupees being pumped into Nagaland in whichever way, immediately squanders it to satisfy his craze for posh living. They are not keeping a single paisa in bank or elsewhere. All the money is spent for costly clothing, good food and wine or Western-style furniture.

On account of the absence of saving habit, no private capital is accumulating for investment in agriculture or industry. Without capital formation how can the Nagas achieve self-reliance and advance towards industrialization? The modern civilization they are eager to adopt will be a borrowed one. Self-reliance in trade and industry is the first prerequisite of modern civilization and its economic basis has to be built up in one's own country. The vicarious modernism of the Nagas is too weak to be stable and lasting.

If the Government of India decides to wash its hands of Nagaland and stop the annual inflow of twenty crore rupees, the very next day modernism in Nagaland will collapse like a punctured balloon. A country is built up not on a few schools,

colleges or hospitals, but on a sound economic basis. Some Nagas boast that if the Government of India stops helping them financially, some country or other will come forward to assist Nagaland. Even if such a thing happens that will not lessen the Nagas' dependence: instead of India they will be depending on some other country. Real independence will remain as distant a goal as now.

Such words as separatism, self-rule, centralization, decentralization, regional autonomy, etc. are manifestations of the simmering political discontent in the country. The question posed by the Nagas is not an exclusively Naga question. The discontent is genuine, but its intensity varies from region to region. When it takes a very much aggravated form, it looks like a demand for full-fledged sovereignty. Comparatively moderate demands also become extremist in some respects when extremist methods are adopted. Even the most extremist demand for complete sovereignty is not a demand for total severance of relations.

Relations do exist after the States or nationalities have separated. Sometimes these relations are strengthened on a new basis—the basis of equality and recognition of each one's uniqueness. The struggle for freedom in the history of civilization is not the struggle for moving away from one another but of establishing honourable relations on a new foundation, as can be seen from the fact that whereas in the nineteenth century there were only a few truly independent countries, there are more than a hundred and fifty of them today. That does not mean that the world has been reduced to a few clusters of independent nations isolated from one another. Rather, the trend is towards an organic unity of all the races of mankind. Contradictions persist but, in the very nature of things, they cannot exert a centrifugal force. Maybe, the contradictions and strains arise because we cannot draw ourselves within our shells, as it were, cutting ourselves off from our fellow human beings.

To revert to our original question: the possibility of a change in the Indian leadership and the Nagas' preparation—or the lack of it—to meet this new situation. A quickwitted Naga leader put a counter-question to me: If a new leadership came at the helm of affairs, what would it give to the Nagas and what relation would they like to have with the Nagas? I could not answer this question, because, it is a deplorable fact that the anti-Congress "progressive" parties parading "All-India" labels are far too busy trying to get into power in the States and at the Centre to clearly explain their policies vis-a-vis the Nagas, Mizos and other hill tribes. Maybe, they have not at all thought about the matter.

Distant Dream

On the other hand, aggressive parties like the Jan Sangh with their well-known slogan of "Hindu, Hindi, Hindustan" want nothing more than subservience from the non-Hindu tribes and communities. Their brand of nationalism—with which they professedly seek to preserve the unity and integrity of India—is nothing but the Hindu edition of imperialism. They want to be the successors-in-power of the Pathan, Moghul and British rulers.

So far as the Leftist progressive parties devoted to the ideals of democracy, socialism or communism are concerned, the time has come for them to formulate clear, unambiguous policies on the questions that are agitating the Nagas and from the Nagas have gripped the minds of all tribes inhabiting north-east India. A change in Indian leadership must not be a replacement of one set of leaders by another; the new leaders must have a new message. As yet it remains a distant dream.

The responsibility, therefore, rests on both sides. The Nagas will have to cooperate with the new leaders and the latter on their part will have to develop relations of cooperation with the Nagas. Through such a reciprocity in approach, will it be possible to hammer out a solution acceptable to all con-

cerned. Finding a political formula is not the main task; indeed, it may be comparatively easy. The really difficult task is to create the psychological climate and the urge for mutual understanding, for a heart-to-heart talk, for a free and frank exchange of ideas. Throwing formulas at each other will not take us anywhere.

One should approach the Naga and other tribes not with the arrogance of civilizing them but with humility so as to win their help and support because without them we cannot progress nor can they without us. The outlook should be, to resuscitate the whole country, to make it really independent, by accepting the equal rights of all. A backward, poverty-stricken, overpopulated country such as ours can advance only through the cooperation and interdependence of the entire people or groups of people making up the nation.

The tribal or nationality question is not the sole question before us. The rot has gone deep into our society, our economy, in administration, in the sphere of education and culture. Injustice and oppression stalk the land. If nothing short of a revolution can deliver us, let it be a revolution for all the tribes, all the linguistic groups, all the religious communities. Such a revolution will infuse a new life into us. To look upon it parochially from the narrow interest of say, only Nagas or Bengalees will end in a frustrating waste of energy. The revolutionary movement of one will be negated by the counter-revolutionary resistance of the other.

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Neglect of Tribal People in Andhra

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE report on the working of the tribal development blocks (TD Blocks) in Andhra Pradesh, the first of its kind to be published by any State Government, throws significant light on the reasons for the unrest in the tribal areas in Srikakulam district, where Left Communists have been active.

During the last twenty years since Independence, very little has been done for these tribal people and whatever has been done has not even touched the fringe of the tribal problem. The administration excused itself by saying that the territorial readjustments on account of formation of Andhra State during the First Plan and the Andhra Pradesh during the Second Plan and the national emergency during the Third Plan period prevented it from doing much to implement the plans intended to ameliorate the conditions of the tribal people.

Despite the organisation of Tribal Development Blocks which brought 5.31 lakhs out of a total tribal population of 13.24 lakhs under them and the injection of more money for their development, it is now admitted officially that "it is the non-tribal who has been benefiting more from the programmes". A survey conducted by the Tribal Cultural Research and Training Institute has revealed that in implementing the agricultural programmes, the non-tribals have benefited more in respect of certain items; and for other items, the share of the non-tribals is quite sizable considering the percentage of non-tribal population living in tribal development blocks".

It is this non-tribal living in tribal areas that is at the root of the present unrest, grabbing the tribal land and the benefits intended for them. The Andhra Chief Minister himself admitted in the last session of the State Assembly that nearly 40,000 acres of tribal land, which had passed into the hands of non-tribals, had to be restored to them. According to a socio-economic survey, in eight villages of Chintapalli TD block and seven villages of Bhadrachalam block alone, 40 land alienation cases in Chintapalli and 31 in Bhadrachalam were detected, in which the non-tribals were occupying tribals' lands.

Apart from this, the main enemy of the Tribals Government's own inertia and ineptitude in securing to the tribal the protection assured to him under twenty-three Acts and Regulations enacted from time to time to safeguard exclusively the interests of the Scheduled tribes. "It is not that the present legislation and protection are inadequate" says the report.

With a Government interested only in talking about relief to the tribals but acting in a manner contrary to this, with the non-tribals ever ready to exploit the illiterate tribals, it should be a matter of surprise that the Communists have been so inactive all these years in areas where injustice remains the order of the day.

The Scheduled area of 29,683.20 sq. km with a population of 13.24 lakhs of tribals is distributed over eight districts of the state, covering 4,346 villages. The Koyas, Yanadis, Yerukulas

and Gonds constitute 52.6 per cent of the total tribal population. While Gonds are confined to the Telangana area alone, Koyas are found in almost all the districts. The main occupation of the tribal people is agriculture, 82.30 per cent of the Scheduled tribe workers are engaged either in agriculture or are working as agricultural labourers. In some blocks, this percentage goes upto 92.64 and 96.84 per cent.

Land is the most prized possession of the tribal and the main source of his subsistence. While land has been surveyed and settled, and pattas were granted in the Telangana area, it was not so in Andhra, where a feudal type of Muttadari system is still in vogue. The report says "The pressure on land is increasing and the tribal people are now keen to acquire ownership of land. *Restrictions are being increasingly imposed upon their movements in forest areas.* A feeling of insecurity of tenure is discernible. The average per capita holding works out to 0.82 acres.... The tribal represent a typical example of agrarian economy with low yield, poor earnings and under-employment. The yield per acre in the scheduled area is not even one-third of the average yield in the plains".

The per capita income of a tribal is only Rs 134.82 or less than 40 paise per day as against Rs 394.33 for the State. The average consumer expenditure per head comes to Rs 141.14 among tribals, while the State average is Rs 286.84.

Literacy among the tribes is found to be 4.41 per cent as against 21.2 per cent literacy in the whole State.

This background underlines firstly the need to tackle the land problem; and secondly, the importance of overcoming the extreme backwardness of these areas and bridging the gulf between the tribal and plains areas.

Despite the recognition by the Government of the eagerness of the tribals to acquire ownership of land, this problem received no attention at all during the three Plan periods. As the report says, "development of communications, expansion of education and medical facilities, setting up of the Scheduled Tribes Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation are the major contributions of the three Plans". It was more a welfare approach than an economic one. The result has been that despite an expenditure of Rs 5.47 crores in fifteen years for developmental programmes, the tribals continue to co-exist with their age-old problems.

The Report

It can be well imagined how much developmental activity can be generated in the blocks after spending Rs 2.76 per head per year! The Director of the Tribal welfare, who prepared the report, was cautious enough not to make any tall claims of the physical achievements, but rests content with the observation that the performance of the blocks "created a sense of awareness among the tribals regarding developmental programmes."

It would be worthwhile examining how even this paltry amount was spent through the instrument of what is euphemistically called Panchayat Raj or the organs of democratic decentralisation.

In practice whether from the point of giving representation to the tribals in the Panchayat Raj institutions, or of rendering benefit to them, the tribals are invariably looked down upon, and every attempt is made to deny them their dues.

It might look more than satisfactory when one is told that of the 634 gram panchayats in the 24 TD blocks, as many as 473 panchayats have tribal Sarpanches, and 76.26 per cent of the 4015

members of Panchayats came from Scheduled tribes or that 71.20 per cent of the members of the samitis are from tribal population. But these percentages and averages are deceptive. Even the report had to concede that "there is ample scope and need to improve the representation of the tribals in the gram panchayats by reserving the office of the Sarpanch in such of those panchayats which have 50 per cent of tribal population."

Similarly, at the samiti level, the report stated that facts and figures clearly indicate that "the percentage of scheduled tribe population to the total population in the block area has no bearing upon the representation of tribals in the samitis." On the Standing Committees, which are the kingpins in samiti administration, "there is a tendency among the non-tribal members to obtain a majority in the important standing committees.... The tribals are not allowed to take full advantage of their numerical strength."

Inadequate Representation

It is a usual phenomenon at the samiti level that a relatively insignificant and unrecognised panchayat President is installed as the President of the samiti by the manoeuvres of the non-tribals from outside, and he has to depend precariously on the support of the vested interests who use him as a tool to achieve their ends. The samiti members are indifferent towards the business of the samiti. Vast majority of members of panchayats act as passive observers in the meeting. The report concludes that the Panchayat Raj system was introduced in tribal areas from outside without adequate preparation. The introduction of Panchayat Raj and democratic decentralisation has in no way improved the quality of the programme partly because of the inadequate representation of the tribals in the system.

Having decided to uplift the tribals through the samitis, the minimum the Government ought to have done is to provide them with the finances and the wherewithal with which the local ad-

ministrative machinery could undertake such works. But, the report says that according to information furnished by 16 TD blocks, grants disbursed by the State Government under the Act were not received by all the blocks in a uniform pattern, since giving grants to samitis was on the basis of population. While population basis might be a just procedure in advanced areas, this principle goes against the interests of sparsely populated tribal areas.

Rank Poverty

The more the tribals in any blocks, the more it was found difficult by panchayats to collect local taxes, in view of their rank poverty. It was here that the administrative machinery was found wanting in sympathy, understanding and imagination. For instance, as regards assigned revenues, six out of 16 TD blocks have not received the 25-paisa-per-head grant; only two blocks received grants under local cess; there are no releases to three blocks under the head of education grant. The full cost of maintaining the transferred institutions is not being provided by the departments which transferred those institutions to the blocks. As things stand, it was only a pittance of less than Rs three that was spent per head per year and even this amount was either not released in time or was not released at all. Added to this is the fact that large amount of funds lapse—it comes to 19.45 per cent of the total pass book balance in all the 24 Blocks—either due to inefficiency, red tape or bureaucratic delays.

Funds allotted for various activities were considered inadequate. "Funds for maintenance of primary health centres and other departmental institutions are not sufficient.... There are instances of medical institutions functioning without enough provisions for medicines. In far flung areas, the medical officer cannot prescribe medicines and ask the patients to purchase them. The capacity to purchase also does not exist. In eight out of 24 blocks, the funds released for health institutions are inadequate. Same is the position with regard

to veterinary institutions. Regarding grants for boarding houses, the funds were inadequate in four blocks. In five blocks, the funds were inadequate for seed store establishments."

Poor Finances

At the panchayat level, the general feature was that despite their poverty, the tax collections were above 50 per cent in 14 out of 24 samiti areas. However, in some areas predominantly inhabited by Scheduled tribes, tax collection was very low. Even though the financial position of gram panchayats on an average appears to be satisfactory, the block-wise analysis reveals poor financial position of gram panchayats in certain blocks, the average income of panchayat being less than Rs. 500 in nine blocks, excluding the government grant. The Report observes that "Even after implementing all the recommendations made by the Santhanam Committee with regard to improving the resources of a Panchayat, the picture will not change very much in the scheduled areas."

A study of the actual implementation of development programmes under various heads is further revealing.

Agriculture: By far, this is the one programme which attracted the tribal farmer more than any other programme. But the same programmes, same methods and techniques introduced in the plains areas were mechanically transplanted in the tribal areas, without taking into consideration the peculiar conditions prevalent and the backwardness of the tribal. "It mainly concentrates upon rapid diffusion of innovations at a pace too fast for the tribal to catch up. It is not the number of sophisticated implements distributed or the demonstrations held that can give a correct idea of actual improvement brought about where agriculture still suffers from soil erosion, obstructing shrubs and stumps, meagre irrigation facilities." Improved seed is neither supplied in time nor in adequate quantity. The tribal wants to "charm" the seeds with supernatural power without which he is not convinced of getting good

yields. This belief is not taken into consideration, while giving them the seeds.

"Most of the demonstration equipment purchased at a heavy cost remains as a show-piece at the block headquarters. The few demonstrations do not leave a lasting impression on the tribal mind as these sophisticated implements are beyond the economic capacity of the poor tribal. The improved implements are introduced without properly ascertaining the felt needs of the people Regarding the chemical fertilisers, except a few progressive tribal farmers, all the other cultivators generally sell them away to plainmen."

Minor Irrigation: The blocks do not even maintain an exhaustive list of irrigation sources to be developed and those which require restoration. Enough attention was not paid to development of minor resources and this could be gauged from the fact that in six blocks, there was no allotment at all under this head. No irrigation sources were developed in two blocks since their inception. In 14 blocks, the entire amount was not booked for expenditure. Often the allotments made do not suffice even for maintenance, let alone construction of new ones. For instance, in Ashwaraopet block, allotment of only Rs 5,149 was made in a year for maintaining 392 water sources.

Animal Husbandry: With vast grazing areas in the forests, one would expect the conditions of the animals better than in the plains. But, in fact, they are much more emaciated. While extremities in seasonal conditions might be one factor, another important factor is that cattle from the adjoining plains areas are brought in large numbers to tribal areas during summer for grazing and whatever is left, is not sufficient for the animals of the tribals.

Dismal Failure

Though arrangements were made at the block headquarters for treatment of animals and the VLWs were given veterinary first-aid boxes, "treatment of animals is never done systematically". Poverty and ignorance are the biggest hindrances in maintaining

animals properly in these areas. The poultry programme is a "dismal failure" since the exotic breed has nowhere acclimatised itself.

Cooperation: The report has almost suggested the winding up of all the cooperatives in the tribal areas and allotment of the amount to the Financial Development Corporation of the tribals. The investment of Rs eight lakhs by the four multipurpose projects "literally went down the drain". The performance of cooperatives is not very encouraging mainly because the tribal peasants are not creditworthy and are therefore denied any loans. In some cases, crisis is precipitated by non-tribals who take full advantage of the illiteracy, poverty and ignorance of the tribals.

Industries: While a commendable effort was made towards development of industries based on forest produce, and training was imparted to the tribal boys in various crafts, it is stated in the report that the training programmes are not related to availability of local raw material. The training is mostly for preparing articles which are not in demand in tribal areas. The artisans trained are not generally given sufficient aid to buy the improved tools. Industries were carelessly located at places where raw materials are not available or have to be brought from the plains.

Education: Literacy among Scheduled tribes is 4.41 per cent, and their percentage to the total literates of the general population is only 0.77. Of the total school-age children of 95,193, as many as 61,504 were "enrolled" in schools; but "the attendance is very poor in all the schools. Many of the schools are single-teacher schools where neither teacher nor the taught are regular in attendance". There is wastage, stagnation and absenteeism and the whole programme is not suitable for tribal areas. The teachers are not given any special orientation in tribal life and culture.

Roads: In view of the difficult terrain, construction of roads is a costly proposition in the tribal areas. It appears that the job has been left mainly to the

blocks which are not fully equipped to execute major road works.

Health and Sanitation: Less than Rs. 40 lakhs has been spent over a period of 15 years on health and sanitation. The facilities provided are considered "inadequate judged by any standard". Nearly half of the villages in the tribal areas have no drinking water wells. Though primary health centres or rural dispensaries are located in some areas, there are block headquarters without bare minimum of medical facilities; some of the medical units are functioning without the full complement of

staff and sufficient medicine.

It would be a mere platitude to say that the problem of tribal backwardness is gigantic and it is too early to judge the performance of any government. The review made in the preceding paragraphs would amply prove that what has been done falls far short of what the Government itself claims to have done; and secondly most of what has been done has helped only the non-tribals; and thirdly the government at the state level itself does not take adequate interest in implementing its own executive order that a minimum

of three per cent of the budget should be spent on tribal welfare.

More than anything else is the Government's woeful neglect of the land problem, which is the crux of tribal problem. What platoons of special police cannot achieve, can be achieved in no time if this land problem is tackled and protection is afforded to the tribals from the non-tribal plains people. The performance of the Andhra Government during the last three Five Year Plans does not leave scope for the illusion that it will undertake this job with the vigour it deserves.

REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION IN STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM (Continued from Page 16)

is in force, Parliament will be powerless to make amendments to the Constitution in order to meet this difficult situation.

19. Right to property, of course, is not the only provision contained in Part III of the Constitution. There are other rights like the right to equality before law, right against discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth; right to equality of opportunity in matters of public employment and so on. They are supposed to be enforceable by Courts of Law. But we know very well that, while the Constitution solemnly declares that every citizen of India is equal before another citizen, inequality between the rich and the poor is steadily increasing. This growing inequality cannot be prevented even by the Supreme Court, though this right is (on paper) enforceable by Courts of Law. As for the right against discrimination on grounds of religion, it is enough to point out how the militant organisations preaching hatred for non-Hindu religious communities, particularly the Muslims, have become a serious threat. Although the seriousness of this threat is recognised even by the Home Minister of the Union Government, he seems to be powerless to stop the growing attacks on the religious minorities. Here again, minorities who are victims of militant communal organisations of the majority community are helpless; the Courts which are supposed to enforce this right are also powerless. Without making a more detailed analysis of all other Fundamental Rights, which are sacred and rather important for the common people, it may be pointed out that the most fundamental of the Fundamental Rights—the right to personal freedom—has been subjected to the most serious and shameless violations. The operation of the Defence of India Rules framed in the wake of the border conflict with China has become the subject matter of serious criticism by all sections of the democratic public opinion in the country. The Supreme Court itself, in one of its judgements, cast doubts on the legality and constitutionality of certain provisions of the DIR and held back its judgement only on the ground that the very emergency

declaration made by the President took such measures away from the purview of the Court. In other words, the very Supreme Court which through a majority judgement banned Parliament from legislating against the Right to Property seemed powerless against the Government's attack on the fundamental right of personal liberty. Would it be unpatriotic on our part under these circumstances to conclude that the net result of the provisions in Part III and IV and the way in which they are interpreted by the Courts and enforced by the executive make it clear that every other Fundamental Right is to be subordinated to the Right to Property; while the essentials of a Welfare State are reduced to mere declarations of pious intentions?

(To be Continued Next Week)

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MANISHA GRANTHALAYA

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Betty Gets The Infrastructure

Mrs Betty Keat Kalaan, an American resident in New Delhi who happened to overstay her visa, went berserk. Rather, she stayed berserk in her first floor flat, throwing empty bottles and cans and stones at passers-by. Complaints from the neighbours prompted the Police to make tentative contacts, but Betty held out, refusing the police entry into her flat. So for months she could not be arrested or otherwise restrained, until she began douching people on the ground floor with her water hose. . . . In a pre-dawn operation, nearly fifty policemen and policewomen surrounded the flat, while Betty lay asleep, and an officer climbed in using a ladder. The door was thus unlatched from within, and the policewomen came in and carried Betty away bundled in her bed wraps. . .

—News

MOST Delhi papers, with a few exceptions, had blacked this sensational news out, in deference, one gathers, to the US Embassy's dislike of sensationalism. The United States is currently trying to encourage nonsensationalism throughout Asia to contain communism. What better example of nonsensationalism could one have than General Westmoreland's reports to the White House that the tide of war was turning, and that the United States had really won the hearts of the Viet Nameese people? Well, back to Betty. What really happened? Or better, is there a lesson which students of Indian policy and American destiny can draw from the Betty episode?

Plenty of lessons. At first glance (which is the academic equivalent of the onceover) Betty looks like a loner and a looney. Outdated pathology insists that throwing bottles at passers-by is a certain easily recognisable symptom. How badly conditioned we are by the past (Regis Debray says that), and how totally unable to understand the

'madness' of the present!

It was the context of the new that I am trying to place Betty in. Both Betty and her beloved President have shown an almost identical preference for the *position of strength*. In a rather homely, Peace Corps way, the position of strength was illustrated by the grand stand on the first floor. Down below was the *infrastructure*, a word that must ring bells ding dong for anyone exercised over seeping international communism. We certainly don't mean the infrastructure the Planning Commission speaks of in its agony, but the infrastructure of the Viet Cong which Westmoreland gets with the napalm. Betty got it with water, which was getting it cheap.

Nor have I had any difficulty in understanding the apparent madness which characterised the whole enterprise. Madness is a matter of attributing oddity to others; like many in relatively peaceful countries like ours tend to join up with insensate American dissidence to call the Viet

Nam operation mad, merely because it looks different from what you might do. It takes a good deal of effort and goodwill to understand that the Americans are fighting your battle, fighting a battle which you are unwilling to fight. International communism is creeping all over the place, and if you cared to look, more than half of those whom Betty hit with bottles flung from her first floor position of strength were those in its pay. The other half or less were nonaligned gullibles.

And now that we have let Betty be arrested for madness against non-consenting adults, what happens to the Indian image? It is true that we have insured our credentials as a non-aligned people by refusing to trade with North Viet Nam. But we have done so saying that the luxury goods we sell them might fall into Chinese hands. (We let the Chinese have enough of our luxury goods through Nepal, and an additional quota through Nepal would give them too much luxury, make softies of them, and leave us open to the charge of having corrupted them in order to derive unfair advantage in a future showdown.) We introduced a needless complication by asserting that we were not implementing the trade ban on American advice. That only helps to give the Chinese the impression that the Free World is divided. The restraining of Betty Kalaan strengthens that impression further.

However, for the United States these are the hazards of the crusade, the scepticism, the unhappy juxtaposition with underdeveloped sanities. But the individual American cannot cease in his endeavour on that account; he must take the American lesson to the people of the world, and drive it home (as Betty did to the ground floor) in simple formulations and examples. It is a pity that Dandekar and Masani are feuding, and Patil fighting the requisitionists, that there wasn't any like-minded person last week to interpret to Indian opinion the seeming madness of Betty Kalaan.

—Charvaka

Britain's Double Game

RAMESH JAURA

SINCE the Kampala peace talks broke down on May 31, a fresh move has been initiated by the British Government in an endeavour to bring the year-long Nigerian civil war to the negotiated conclusion.

British Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart has had informal exploratory talks with the representatives of the Federal Government and of secessionist Biafra—who were in London—to see if he could “smooth the path back to the conference table”. In the absence of Commonwealth Secretary-General Arnold Smith, the Minister of State for Commonwealth Affairs Lord Shepherd met the Federal Nigerian Government's representative Anthony Enahoro on June 7 and the head of Biafran delegation Sir Louis Mbanefo on June 10.

Another event of import since the collapse of Kampala talks was the British Government's refusal to concede the demand of Britain-Biafra Association to end supply of arms to the Federal Government. Explaining the British Government's decision not to cut off arms supply Michael Stewart said: “That would have been, in effect, to have said; We have put you in the position where you are wholly dependent on us for instruments of power till now. When you are faced by a challenge to your authority we are going to put you at a very serious disadvantage.” Nigeria in fact, has been wholly dependent on Britain for military training and supply of arms.

Britain's initiatives to end the Nigeria-Biafra hostilities and

continued arms supply to the Federal Government are not dictated by altruistic motives. Cessation of arms supply, according to *The Times* (London), appeared to be founded on one simple proposition: that if supplies were halted Britain would lose its present influence over the Nigerian Government.

This was also the consideration guiding Britain's reluctance to recognise Biafra when the civil war erupted in Nigeria—at the time of the Arab-Israeli conflict last June. Secessionist Biafra which supplies 65 percent of Nigeria's oil hoped to get recognition from Britain and USA as they were threatened to be badly hit by blockade of oil supplies from the Middle East.

Short of recognising Biafra—*de jure* or *de facto*—Britain initially turned down Federal Government's request for commercial purchases of arms and equipment. A similar demand had also been turned down by USA. The British Government, however, reversed its earlier decision following the Soviet Union's ready compliance with Federal Nigeria's request for arms supply.

Another aspect of Britain's decision to continue supply of arms to the Federal Government despite protests from Britain-Biafra Association was Nigeria's warning that Britain would face “grave consequences” if it stopped supplying arms. At a news conference, Federal Commissioner for Labour and Information, Anthony Enahoro had said: “Nigeria would be compelled to turn elsewhere and this might involve British interests”. These

include international oil cartels in Nigeria.

There is no doubt that these warnings had to be heeded by Britain in view of the threatened “steps against the widespread commercial interests of the Netherlands in Nigeria”. The Netherlands had suspended supply of arms and ammunition to the Federal Government. What is more, holding back arms by Britain would have been interpreted as an act of aiding and abetting Lt. Col. Ojukwu's Biafra which has been so far recognised by Tanzania, Ivory Coast, Gabon and Zambia.

The British Government obviously would not find it comfortable to be clubbed together with Tanzania whose radicalism Britain does not want Nigeria to share. By virtue of being ex-French territories, Ivory Coast and Gabon have been closer to France which has not only been barring Britain's entry into the ECM but has also helped in the growth of their economies by special concessions granted under the Yaounde Convention.

Even Nigeria as a special case has been enjoying special tariff concessions for its exports to the ECM countries. This has obviously not been to the liking of Britain which considers it a French attempt to wean away the Nigerians. France's recent decision to impose a total embargo on arms shipments to Nigeria is, thus, a godsend opportunity for Britain to re-establish its earlier influence with Lagos. British Government has now every reason to derive satisfaction from the private admission

of Federal Nigerian Government sources that some French individuals and groups have been supplying arms to Biafra.

In this context, Michael Stewart's statement in the House of Commons on June 12 assumes significance. On the question of international action to get a cessation of arms supply all round, Stewart said: "The practical difficulties of getting such an agreement would be very great indeed. . . *In many cases, of course, supplies to both sides are not direct government supplies; the action taken by a Government is often simply that of permitting or of not bothering to stop supplies being sent by private suppliers*".

This is where a discerning eye can see the double game that Britain has been playing even before Nigeria became independent. Though the Henry Willink Commission report in the pre-independence days had recommended the sub-division of the four States in the Federation into 12, Nigeria became independent under the Federal Government headed by Prime Minister Tawfa Balewa who attempted in vain to allay the fears of the dominance of the Northern region—accounting for over two-thirds of the entire population—over the dominant tribes of the other regions.

In the midst of a first class constitutional crisis—converging into political—in 1965, the military coup d'état led by Maj. Gen. Ironsi took place. It brought into positions of authority the Eastern Ibos. This, the killings of non-Ibos in the North, including murder of Tawfa Balewa (found dead on roadside in the January 1966 coup) and the resentment caused in the North by the Unification Decree of Ironsi's short-lived regime led to a counter coup in July 1966—and a number of Ibos in the North were killed.

It may be recalled at this juncture that the Federal regime under Abubakar Tawfa Balewa who retained the title of "Sir" even after independence was hailed as an example of largest democracy in the African continent: Every fifth African South of Sahara is a Nigerian. The British Government had over-

stepped the recommendation of the Royal Commission, and found a Federal coalition of the Muslim North's Northern People's Convention and the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens a suitable combine to safeguard Britain's interests in independent Nigeria.

The British Government hoped that with Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe as President of the Federation, whose NCNC was dominant in the East, the Ibos would be satisfied. Thus the Federation was not based in terms of the welfare of the people but on the interest of a few who controlled the regions. Added to this was the "tribal" conflicts which the British had precipitated when the need for granting independence to Nigeria became a compelling reality.

Another Congo

However, the new military government led by Maj. Gen. Yakubu Gowon decided to create 12 States. This was not unwelcome to the British officials who saw in Maj. Gowon's anxiety to abolish the unitary system—which, according to the Federal ruler, could not run "without an element of dictatorship"—the possibility of continuing their influence. Simultaneously, Eastern region military governor Ojukwu's disagreement with the decision of the Supreme Military Council, which had met at Aburi (Ghana), was being carefully watched.

Ojukwu's secession from the Federation coincided with the West Asian crisis. It threw the British Government into confusion which was manifested in the reversal of its earlier decision not to supply arms to Federal Nigeria. There were reports that Biafra was being supplied arms by Britain, directly or through the NATO countries like Portugal which is still an important factor in Biafra continuing its fight. Both the British Government and Federal Nigeria however denied the reports. The fact that Britain not only wields influence with Lagos but can also maintain liaison with Biafra is not without significance.

It is in this context that Britain's moves for cessation of

hostilities between Nigeria and Biafra have to be viewed. If the fresh initiative taken by Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart paves the way for another round of peace talks, the settlement may not be in sight. Even if a workable solution is arrived at the resistance in Biafra promises to continue with another Congo in the offing. Ojukwu has already started talking of "second (guerilla) phase of our struggle".

At the Kampala talks, the Commonwealth Secretary-General Arnold Smith and Ugandan President Dr Milton Obote, no doubt, succeeded in persuading the Federal Government to revise its ceasefire proposals. According to Federal Government sources, this was done on assurance given to Arnold Smith by Biafran delegation that the modified proposals would be acceptable. But what led to the breakdown of talks was the Federal proposal that "general amnesty" would be granted in respect of "other persons connected with the rebellion", and in the case of "organisers of rebellion" it would be done in "appropriate cases".

This was taken by the Biafran delegation to mean that Col. Ojukwu and his cohorts would not be spared. Otherwise most of the Federal regime's proposals seek to ensure removal of the fear of domination by one tribe over the other. The Federal Government envisaged the appointment of a Commission to "administer the rebel-held areas". It was to be headed by an Ibo appointed by the Federal Government and "a number of other members, who are also Ibos"—half of whom were to be appointed by the Federal Government and the rest "in consultation with rebel leaders". The Federal proposals also promised recruitment of "persons of Ibo origin" and their integration into the Nigerian army.

It appears now that the success of the proposed talks would depend upon an assurance by the Federal regime that Ojukwu and his cohorts would not be eliminated, and that the existing division among the secessionist Biafran leaders would not reach an extent where the pro-settle-

ment group accepts some relatively minor modifications as basis for a negotiated settlement. However, a ceasefire reached on the basis of bringing in some "international force"—a British Government proposal which has been resisted by Federal Nigeria so far—to ensure some degree of security to the Ibos, would provide a fertile ground for the Western powers to create another Congo.

On the other hand, if no solution to end the civil strife is found and Ojukwu's threat of guerilla war materialises, it would be unfortunate. For this, however, the blame must rest on Britain—whose policies are largely responsible for the existence of tribal conflicts in Nigeria and other African countries. Tanzania must also equally share the responsibility for recognising Biafra at a time when the key Port Harcourt had fallen into the hands of Federal troops.

Many perhaps would doubt the wisdom of Tanzanian President Nyerere's recognition of Biafra; surely the Lagos newspaper reports that 200 Biafran "saboteurs" were being trained in Dar-es-Salaam was not provocation to recognise Biafra; nor should the absence of radicalism among the Federal Nigerian rulers provide sufficient justification for this inexplicable act.

The material equipment and military training being provided by Tanzania, along with UAR and Algeria, to the liberation movements in Southern Africa befits the cause of revolution in Africa: But not the act of abetting secession in another independent African State. Wisdom lies in recognising the reality, and that is: Tanzania itself is a glasshouse. NATO powers like Portugal are just not the company to keep with. While it must be accepted that territories of the present African States were carved out by the colonial powers, the consequences of forcible attempts to reorganise these boundaries are too obvious.

June 14, 1968

Communications

SSP AND NATIONAL POLITICS

Mainstream (May 25, 1968) gave the opportunity to its readers to compare two different stands on the same issue. As a regular reader of the articles by Sri Chitta Ranjan I can assert that there is an impression among readers that he is unbiased in his writings. But the articles in the two issues of *Mainstream* of May 11 and May 25, 1968, have revealed that Sri Chitta Ranjan has formed some permanent prejudice against the SSP. He has uncharitably accused Sri Madhu Limaye of slinging mud all round in spite of the mild tone and language of the latter. A careful study of the two articles in the issue dated May 25 shows that Sri Chitta Ranjan, having been exposed, lost his temper. The logic of Sri Limaye is more convincing than that of Sri Chitta Ranjan and the article of Sri Limaye is self-explanatory.

The issue involved is nothing other than the approaches of various Left forces in India to nationalism. Nationalism plays a vital role in the shaping of Indian politics. This powerful weapon is being used skilfully only by Rightist elements. The only Left force that has countered the Right elements in this field is the SSP. But for the SSP's national stand, the Jan Sangh might have emerged the single alternative to the Congress in the Hindi-speaking areas. If the growth of the Jan Sangh in the Hindi areas has been checked to some extent, it is not because of the struggle of any other Left force.

Even when the SSP decided to use the weapon of nationalism, it maintained its secular stand. The solutions proposed by the SSP, such as an Indo-Pakistan confederation, to solve Kashmir and other India-Pakistan problems, speak of this. If there is a single left force in the country that is prepared to give up its political identity in favour of a

united left party, it is the SSP. It has been made clear by the SSP in its election manifesto that it is prepared to consider any proposal for merger with like-minded parties. The sincerity of the SSP in building up a democratic national Left party cannot be brushed aside. A convinced Socialist will be a socialist in whatever camp he remains and this conviction alone has given the boldness to Socialists to come forward to identify themselves even with Communists or left-minded Jana Sanghis and face the consequences.

The Communists, in spite of their wide mass base in Tamilnad, have utterly failed to counter the growth of the DMK. If the Communists had only maintained their mass support, DMK might not have emerged as the main Opposition in 1962 and as the ruling party in 1967. Does Sri Chitta Ranjan expect the SSP to face the same fate in the Hindi-speaking areas by adopting the outmoded tactics of the Communists? It is very disappointing to note that Communist oriented Left forces in India consider nationalism as a contradiction to internationalism. As pointed out by Sri Madhu Limaye, Communists in other parts of the world are far better in this respect. Though Sri Chitta Ranjan has tried to establish that he finds a change of heart on the part of the CPI and cites the stand of the CPI in the wake of external aggression, it is a well-known fact that the causes for the split in the Communist Party are different—the main issues were international in character rather than national. Why should Sri Chitta Ranjan, posing as a Leftist above party considerations, should take so much pains to justify the blunders of the CPI? Neither the post-independence period standpoints nor the pre-independence

approaches of the CPI have proved that they have improved or corrected themselves. Not a single instance can be quoted where Communists have taken an independent stand different from that of the Russians. The argument that no such contingency arose will not hold water.

The Communists have not improved their position by exploiting the national sentiments of the common man, regional aspirations and advocacy of the people's languages. The SSP, while exploiting these fields, has not lost its international, secular, broad approach. It is true that the SSP joined hands with the Jan Sangh on the Kutch issue. But it is also a fact that the SSP did not join hands with the Jan Sangh either on the Urdu issue or on cow slaughter. The accusation that the SSP's stand on language is not rational or far-sighted and that it safeguards the interests of the party's main bases in UP and Bihar has no elements of truth in it. The language resolution of the SSP was piloted by the delegates from the Southern States who were numerically small at the National Conference at Gaya in the heart of the Hindi area. The other complaint by Sri Chitta Ranjan, that the SSP prefers emotional issues to economic issues, is also shown to be wrong by the party's nationwide agitation to back its 12 point demand. I witnessed picketing by some 100 men at Madurantakam (Madras State) in front of the Taluk Office, and I am convinced that the attitude of SSP men is governed only by economic issues.

Sri Chitta Ranjan's wild allegation that the SSP is organising an agitation on a minor border issue jointly with the Jana Sangh and is thus helping to divert attention from immediate popular issues like elimination of monopolies and ending the exploitation of the working class by feudal interests has no relation to facts. If the SSP is unable to launch an effective mass agitation for redressal of economic demands of the Indian masses, it is not because the SSP has no mind to do so but because it is unable to prepare for

such an agitation with its limited strength. The Left forces in the country, including the communists, are not in an agitational mood and SSP is no exception to this general trend. The Left forces want the weapon of power without much sacrifice and struggle. Another factor to be taken into consideration is the after-effects of agitation and jail-going on a political party. These factors are the main causes for the absence of a grand national struggle. Communist-oriented Left forces have utterly failed in their duty by not joining in the nationwide agitation initiated by the SSP on a charter of demands concerning purely economic issues.

The argument that Communists have kept themselves away from the Kutch agitation only because it amounts to challenging a verdict which, the country represented by its sovereign Parliament has agreed to honour, is very funny. This is the logic of Congress and Swatantra men. Everybody knows to what extent Communists give weight to such technicalities. If at all Communists opted to keep away on this issue, it is due to their keenness to maintain consistency with their international stand. The CPI having stated that the Kutch award was pronounced on political considerations rather

than on title considerations, ought to have joined hands with the SSP. The SSP's approach to the border issue is in line with Marxist theory. They want to maintain national boundaries only till such time as they lose importance and a World Government is formed.

Sri Chitta Ranjan ought to have suggested to Communist-oriented Left elements to join hands with the SSP though not with the Jan Sangh on issues like Kutch and Tibet and thus prove their independent thinking. The prejudice in the mind of the Indian masses against the Communists cannot be eradicated unless they mingle and merge with national democratic socialist forces. Communist-oriented Left forces are not bold enough even to make a formal declaration that they are ready to wind up their party in favour of a strong democratic national socialist political organisation. As of date the SSP alone is in a position to be the base of such a party, and this fact is being realised by the Indian masses gradually. Even though this mass trend is visible, the leadership of the SSP should prove worthy of this growing confidence.

Madurantakam
(Madras State)

- Nagaraj

SSP's APPROACH

SRI Madhu Limaye is one of those Indian leaders who have been devoted to the socialist movement from the very early days. He never believed in ideological polemics, and he took part in the freedom struggle, the Goa movement and in many party "morchas"—including that in Kutch. In spite of this the Indian press (including Leftist journals) has described him as "hero of Monsoon session", "scandal monger" and "expert in privilege motions". This is unfair.

As far as the Indo-Pak confederation idea is concerned, its propounder, Dr Lohia, said in 1965, "We must differentiate between the Pakistani people and the Pakistani Government. The countries, which are artificially partitioned, will have to fall into the category of confederation". He suggested the following ways to settle this problem: (a) To negotiate with Pakistan with an open mind; (b) to help the democratic and humanist elements in Pakistan (The Zirg-a-Pakhtoon, and Indo-Pak Unison Conference

were initiated by the SSP); and (c) to organize guerilla force. Dr Lohia had clarified that until a world government is formed on the basis of adult franchise the national frontiers of the two countries should be maintained. The Kutch agitation is not contradictory to this stand.

It is alleged that motions on the pink coat and the diamond necklace presented to Smt Indira Gandhi before she became Prime Minister were part of his "high drama". The Prime Minister is the highest bureaucrat in the country and the head of the government. Therefore she should be above suspicion. It is not necessary to bring her conduct before the people?

It has been alleged that SSP is busy in reactionary agitation, for instance, the agitation against the Kutch award. The land movement in the hilly regions of UP is not now much in the news; more than 20,000 sq. miles of land has been distributed to landless tillers. The other Leftists did not come out with open support of that agitation. If the SSP is to be accused of being reactionary for leading the Kutch agitation, what of other leftist parties' role in not supporting the land movement? If the SSP is to be blamed for the fall of the Charan Singh government, well, it was for the good of the people. It was for getting irrigation facilities and it was for abolition of land revenue in respect of poor peasants.

As for the question of focussing attention on the Negro problem and on Vietnam, Socialists are not lagging behind. Dr Lohia was following, in the footsteps of Gandhiji when he courted arrest in Alabama (USA) for defying the colour bar, and he inspired the late A.J. Muste, a Negro leader. The Socialists have clear views on this point; they think that national issues must be solved on the basis of national movements, which must be preferred to a social emancipation programme.

As far as communal riots are concerned, it was Dr Lohia who was the first to go to Ranchi and say at a public meeting, "Find out the reasons for such discre-

pancy in our behaviour: on the one hand we are non-violent enough not to kill or eat even animals, and on the other hand a mere rumour can instigate us to slaughter our own brethren". The role of Ramanand Tiwari the socialist leader in the communal riots was praised even by the Union Home Minister.

It has been alleged that a fuss is created by the position adopted by the SSP on the question of women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The work women like Sarla Bhadaria, Akkamma, Premkata Rai and Begum Sultana have done in the field of land agitation has been appreciated. The emergence of Ram Sevak Yadav in UP, Heerji Bhai in Rajasthan and Kishen Patnaik in Orissa can be seen in the light of the policy of preference for Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

As far as the question of Hindi as the national language is concerned, the attitude of the SSP is clear. It was the SSP that initiated bilateral talks with the DMK, but it was the "*Madras red signal*" that paralysed the whole affair. The language resolution at the Gaya conference is an eye-opener. Dr Lohia thought that a microscopic minority or the elite in the country were making use of "the language obstacle" for getting entrenched in their positions. English has made itself a class-divi-

sive force; therefore Socialists must work for the replacement of English by the regional languages.

The SSP is not totally devoted to the Kutch agitation as such, but it is striving for a national programme of twelve demands—Kutch being only part of it. Several hundred people are courting arrest under this programme. The 12 demands including abolition of public schools; free education upto 10th class; irrigation facilities; and replacement of English by Hindi and regional languages. The split in the party is not at all connected with the Kutch agitation or the language issue. It is rivalry between Sri Abbu and Sri Kurup in Kerala, and between Sri Bharati and Sri Raj Narain in UP; it is thus based on the aspirations of individuals.

Lastly, the growth of the Shiv Sena is not only a reflection of the reluctance of the Socialists to counter it, but it also shows up the failure of Communist strategy. It is really surprising that even with their disciplined cadre and with a programme which has economic content, they are trailing behind the Shiv Sena. It may be pertinent to ask the Leftists in this country to point out the reasons for the Shiv Sena defeating the Communists.

Jaipur

P. C. Shastri

CHITTA RANJAN'S REPLY

SRI Nagaraj appears to be under the impression that I am a professional politician pitted against Sri Madhu Limaye and others. I must confess that I have neither the capacity nor the desire to lay pretensions to any such role. Thus the question of my being "exposed" or losing my temper does not arise. I am a professional journalist trying within the limitations of competence and experience to take as objective a view as possible of the national political situation. I have no particular reason to have developed a "permanent

prejudice" against the SSP; nor have I any compulsion or commitment to back the CPI whether it is right or wrong. On the other hand, readers of *Mainstream* will be aware that I have never hesitated to point to the costly blunders committed by the CPI in the past. My chief interest—and the reason for my close association with *Mainstream* from its inception—is in the forging of purposeful Leftist unity in the country in order that ultimately a society based on the principles of equality and social justice may be made a realizable

goal. It follows that I try to judge the position taken by each Leftist party and group—including the Left-inclined section of the Congress Party—by the only valid yardstick of whether the particular attitude at the particular point of time helps or hinders the development of such unity. There is however no claim to infallibility of judgment.

The main point raised by Sri Nagaraj, I think, relates to the question of "nationalism" versus "internationalism". It is certainly true that at one stage the Communists largely allowed themselves to be guided by assessments made abroad of the Indian situation. This resulted not only in patently wrong decisions but in their alienation from the masses of India. The outstanding example is of course 1942; another was the refusal to recognise national independence when it was achieved as a decisive stage in national growth. The first blunder erected a barrier between the CPI and the other militant and Leftist forces in India, and also made vast numbers of people suspicious about the party and its aims; the second left the impression that the Communists were interested in infantile adventurism rather than in the consolidation of freedom and its utilization to channelise the energies of the masses for the attainment of the socio-economic ideals dear to all the Left parties. Sri Nagaraj is surely aware that a severe internal struggle was taking place within the Communist Party in the late forties, with an influential section emphasizing that Marxist ideas should be interpreted in the Indian context and formulated to suit the national genius and needs. This section was not very effective at first, mainly because the doctrinaire element was dominant in the leadership and adventurists could sway sections of the rank and file in some areas. A study of the vicissitudes through which the Communists have passed, leading to the split six years ago, will convince anyone that the section which advocated a healthy nationalism as the basis for the development of Marxist

thought on Indian soil gradually gained ascendancy in both the leadership and the rank and file.

I think there is need not to confuse nationalism with what is being described nowadays as "big nation chauvinism"; it would be wrong to confound patriotism with the Jan Sangh brand of jingoism based on ambitions of communal fascist domination of the country. The problem is not one of contradiction between nationalism and internationalism as both Sri Nagaraj and Sri Shastri have posed it. Purposeful and progressive internationalism has necessarily to be based on healthy, forward-looking nationalism. It would be an oversimplification to see the split that developed among the Indian Communists as having been entirely due to the rift in the international Communist movement, despite the fact that in their polemics the CPI and the CPM have been giving such an impression. An one time this writer felt that the CPM was toeing the Chinese line against India's interests: but now it appears clear from the rejection of the Naxalbari extremists by the leadership of the CPM as well as from the continuing willingness of the CPM to function through the institutions of parliamentary democracy that it would be unwise and unrealistic to dismiss them as "Peking patriots". The split which led to the formation of the CPM and the mutual mudslinging that has been going on between the leaders of the CPI and the CPM seem to have less to do with ideological formulations, national or international, than with incompatibility of temperament among the leaders concerned.

However, I do not propose to deny that the CPI and the CPM have also been guilty of opportunism to the extent that they, along with the SSP, made a religion of anti-Congressism and as a result entered into unprincipled alliances with Rightist and reactionary forces, strengthening the latter in the process. Along with the SSP, again, they hailed office-hunting defectors from the Congress as saviours

and heroes and agreed to their installation in key positions. But unlike the SSP they have not tried to carry the logic of anti-Congressism to absurd lengths. At least on issues like Kutch and Kachathivu they have kept their heads.

It is difficult to swallow Sri Nagaraj's contention that the SSP, by outdoing the Jan Sangh on parochial and jingoistic issues, has prevented the emergence of the Sangh as "the single alternative to the Congress" in the North. Sri Nagaraj finds fault with the Communists of Tamilnad for helping the growth of the DMK. It is true that the Communists, "in spite of their mass base in Tamilnad, have utterly failed to counter the growth of the DMK." Precisely the same is the charge that can be levelled with equal validity against the SSP in relation to the Jan Sangh in UP, Bihar, etc. Or does Sri Nagaraj mean that the Communists should have adopted the chauvinistic and separatist slogans of the DMK in order to prevent the latter's growth?

Sri Nagaraj is surely aware that within the SSP itself there is a strong feeling that the satyagraha in support of the 12-point Charter of Demands has been neglected by the leadership due to its preoccupation with Kutch, and now Kachathivu. It is no use blaming the other Leftist parties for not going to the rescue of the SSP in these circumstances. The SSP could well have taken the initiative to make the movement a collective one of all the Leftist parties, by placing the Charter before the other progressive parties and inviting them to joint action. The other parties should also have had a say in the formulation of the demands. An agitation launched on such a basis would not have petered out as the satyagraha has done. In this I think the SSP leadership has done a distinct disservice to the cause of Left unity in the country. If the SSP had taken such an initiative in a spirit of mutual accommodation and if then any Leftist party had refused to cooperate on frivolous grounds

Sri Nagaraj's criticism would have been justified. As things stand, it is not.

I have only to point out that the SSP and the CPI have launched more or less identical agitations demanding land for the landless in the rural areas of UP and some other States. They are also demanding remission of land revenue on uneconomic holdings. What both parties want, judging by their demands and agitations, is total reorganisation of the agricultural set-up so that the tillers of the soil will come into their own instead of being at the mercy of money-lenders, big landlords and bureaucrats. Now, what objection can there be to coordination of these struggles so that the impact can be infinitely greater? The agitations highlight the fact that in terms of socio-economic aims the SSP and the CPI have very much more in

common than either party has with the Jana Sangh.

I may also point out that even in the ranks of the SSP rethinking is going on about the kind of alliances forged on the basis of a negative anti-Congressism. Perhaps these feelings will take a long time to crystallise, but their existence cannot be wished away. This is natural, for whatever the leaders of Leftist parties may decide upon from time to time for opportunistic reasons, the rank and file will constantly come back to the basic questions of socio-economic transformation. Hence the regret that the energies of the rank and file of the Leftist parties are not being properly utilised by the leadership to mobilise the masses for a massive struggle for such radical changes. It is this failure of the Left parties that led to the collapse of United Front Govern-

ments in some States and constantly threatens to bring down the coalition government in Kerala.

The real question, whether it is the SSP or any other progressive party, is whether any of these parties is justified in doing anything which takes popular attention away from the task of preparing for the struggle for radical changes in the economic structure. This is what I would humbly request Sri Nagaraj and Sri Shastri to consider.

My article in any case was not meant as destructive criticism of the SSP. I had only tried to give expression to sorrow that Sri Madhu Limaye and certain others should be engaged in spreading confusion among progressive sections of public opinion.

C. N. Chitta Ranjan

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK: HOW STRONG IS OUR SECULARISM? (Continued from Page 8)

than ten per cent of the population: the fallacy of this theory lies in the fact that there are many regions in this great country where riots have not broken out though Muslims number more than ten per cent; secondly, Kashmir with its overwhelming Muslim population has had a unique record of communal peace and amity which would not have been disturbed last year but for the initiative of Sri Balraj Madhok and his communalist band.

There is still another theory in official quarters that wants to prove that "initial aggression" in communal disturbances is created more by the Muslims than by the Hindus, and in support of this thesis, the police reports are cited to show that out of 169 incidents in 1967, the Muslims were the first to commit aggression in 59 cases and the Hindus in 42 cases. It is not difficult to understand how such police reports are made. In any communal incident, it is quite natural to expect the local police to go by the prevailing version, which invariably would be influenced by the excitement in the majority community. Also, even if a petty police officer has his own doubts about it, he would very often

take into account the mood of the high-ups and would personally prefer to go by the line of least resistance. There were certainly cases where members of the minority community in sheer despair might have attacked, but it sounds fantastic that those who have lost their lives more should themselves start this suicidal game.

All this underlines the urgency of inculcating into the administrative personnel a severely objective self-discipline, so that its attitude and approach instil confidence in the minority community. In the Union Home Ministry's own report, it is admitted that for first time since Independence, complaints have come of police having sided with the aggressive majority community. In this connection, the conduct of the Central Reserve Police personnel has sometimes been criticised. Also, Sri Jayprakash Narayan has rightly referred to the failure of intelligence to anticipate communal incidents.

Communal slant in our school courses is a matter which the Education Minister can no longer sleep over. Particularly in the matter of presentation of Indian history, certain traditional no-

tions and images directly foster communal prejudices against the minority community, while history as is being rewritten in some of the States heavily under pressure of Hindu communal elements, will only help to perpetuate communal animosity in the new generations.

* * *

THE enormous erosion in the secular consciousness of the Indian masses in recent years demands serious thinking on the part of the forward-looking elements in this country about the ways and means to repair the damage. To protect a minority community and defend its rights and liberties, its very self-respect is the charge of the majority community, particularly of those among them who want to build a new society of hope and prosperity for the common man.

This is the message that was left behind by the martyrdom of this nation's greatest man of the century. We have to realise that twenty years after his martyrdom, secularism is still an objective—and not yet the living reality—in this country.

June 18

N.C.

Delightful Anecdotes

We Nehrus by Krishna Nehru Hutheesingh, (Pearl Publications Private Ltd. Bombay, 1967 Rs. 30)

KRISHNA Nehru Hutheesingh, the most extrovert and flamboyant of the Nehrus, was also the most forthright in telling the truth, not because she had any moral compunctions but because she lacked the conventional inhibitions. The national struggle in India and the role that the Nehrus played in it, is a well known saga and there is very little that Krishna Hutheesingh has or could have added to it.

Jawaharlal the charismatic leader of India was so reticent at talking about himself, so much so that his own autobiography turned more into a political treatise than a personal story. There is a genuine and justifiable desire on the part of the people for a glimpse of him not only as a political leader but as a man—as a son, a husband and a father. In this respect the book is not as revealing as one might have expected. There is not much in the book, in this respect, which is not already public property. B.R. Nanda's book, *The Nehrus* gives a much better insight into the temper and atmosphere of the Nehru household and the relationship between the father and son than Krishna Hutheesingh's.

"*We Nehrus*" is a book full of anecdotes and stories and is a delightful chronicle of the Nehru family. It is not a book of history and if not treated as such, makes interesting reading. Full of sense

of humour, it brings out her own self the best both in the background of her parental home, and after her marriage with Raja Hutheesingh.

"It is surprising that so little has been written about Kamla", writes Krishna Hutheesingh, "for she was one of the most beautiful women I knew or ever have known." One wonders why Krishna Hutheesingh herself did not write more about her. The author's portrayal of her regal, patriarchal father and soft, china-like delicate mother and bits here and there of Bibi amma her aunt, have come out very well. But, although, Krishna Hutheesingh tells stories against herself, quite unreservedly, she slurs over many an unpleasant detail about her sister, Vijayalaxmi Pandit. One wonders whether her hero-worship like description of her elder sister is honest, that is, did she really think of her sister in that light when young. For example, it is a well known fact that Swarup Nehru tormented and taunted Kamla, affecting an air of superiority towards her because when Kamla first entered the Nehru household she lacked Western sophistication and could not even speak English fluently, a great blemish in the eyes of Nan who made fun of Kamla unrelentingly. The true pictures of Vijayalaxmi Pandit, egotistical and ambitious comes out in the book

only towards the very end, when Krishna Hutheesingh writes, "My sister cancelled her lecture tour and came tearing home from America. Having been India's Ambassador to Russia and United States, and High Commissioner in London and a world figure because of her presidency of the UN, I believe she thought she had a chance". And later when Indira Gandhi was elected Prime Minister "she had left the hall immediately after the announcement, which did not seem to please her greatly".

Indira's portrait is done with sensitivity and a real tender affection. "That the little girl I had cared for and comforted while her father and mother and grandfather were in prison should become the Prime Minister and leader of the great free nation of India seemed fantastic, beyond imagining. . . I was so proud of her. . . For she is a worthy daughter of a great and beloved man".

The detailed explanations of simple Indian words and customs is rather jarring to an Indian reader. Why did Alden Hatch, with whose collaboration the book was written, have to aggravate this jarring note by his puerile Epilogue? Obviously the book written in a lighter vein is meant primarily for a foreign audience.

—Swaha

POLITICS OF POWER VACUUM

(Continued from Page 12)

in about ten to twelve years. In other words, Mao admitted China's inability to wage an all-out modern warfare for the present at least.

Combination of these two factors—British “withdrawal” and the Chinese reluctance to enter the fray in a big way—has provided a new hope to the United States in regard to its future role in South-east Asia after she is able to extricate her self from the Vietnam war. The *US News and World Report* wrote on January 29 this year that the American armed forces would have no choice but eventually to shoulder the responsibility of defence of this big and strategic portion of the globe stretching from Singapore across the Indian Ocean to the Red Sea and the Mediterranean.

New Plan of Deployment

Those in the know of the American plans of troops deployment in the post-Vietnam-war period, claim that Washington would work out the necessary political pretexts to leave behind an expeditionary force of about 150,000 to 200,000 men in South Vietnam, and station another 100,000 or so in neighbouring Thailand where the US already has some 47,000 troops and military basis capable of large-scale operations. Further West, the US plan is to concentrate on the Indian Ocean islands where she already has and will set up more bases for servicing bombers and submarines carrying nuclear warheads. Reports are also there that plans for a special Indian Ocean fleet, as a part of the Seventh Fleet, are under active consideration of Washington.

Moreover, with her interest in filling the “vacuum”, the United States hopes that the smaller countries of South-east Asia would be drawn in easily to bear the brunt of this new plan of deployment. The dollar difficulties at home will, thus, be obviated and any possible objection to this plan in the US Congress avoided.

The Kuala Lumpur defence talks between Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore, was of great interest to the United States. If it had succeeded in hammering out a new, collective security system, Washington could have offered to join in and “help” these countries out with grandiose plans. As it is, with not much concrete outcome in that direction, it has benefited the US plans all the more. By assuring help not only against external aggression, but also in suppressing local rebellions, Washington will substantially meet the “requirements” of these countries.

In Washington's scheme of things, additional help is expected from Japan. Japan has been allotted the role of Britain in the plan of defence of the Malaccan Straits. Japan's familiarity with this particular area during the Second World War, and her own special interest in this defence scheme has been taken into consideration by Washington. According to the *Oriental Economist* of Japan, blueprints of a “defence project” for this area has already been prepared by the Japanese Maritime Committee of the Defence Agency, in which Tokyo proposes to use its naval self-defence forces.

A Major Defence Alliance

Japan's involvement in the “defence” of South-east Asia will also relieve the US of another worry—the growing disenchantment of the members of the SEATO about its utility and the resultant weakness of this military pact. It will also pave the way for the realisation of the long-standing US plan of a widespread military grouping, policing the entire Pacific and the Indian Ocean region from Korea up to the Mediterranean, and to influencing the policies of the countries there. The *Christian Science Monitor* wrote on February 27, 1968, that US official quarters expected the spirit of regionalism to develop into major defence alliances.

This was also the object of the US sponsored Asian-Pacific Council (ASPAC) and the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN), but could not be implemented. The main reason for this failure was the absence of countries like India from these groupings. As long back as October 2 last year, the *Newsweek* let the cat out of the bag when it wrote that if, for instance, India was associated with these regional alliances, changes could be achieved in her policy. Here is a clear enunciation of the purpose of the existing and proposed defence alliances in South-east Asian region.

Regional Coop. As Cornerstone

It is in the context of all these that one has to judge the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's “retreat” from her seemingly bold “loud thinking” about regional defence. Under the circumstances, India's participation in the proposed regional defence system would have meant nothing but complete surrender to Washington's military plans. And as the *Newsweek* had pointed out, the net result of such an association would have been nothing short of continuous pressures to change India's basic policies of non-alignment and peaceful coexistence. In the given world situation when India's economic development and political sovereignty depend on strictly following this policy, her participation in such a defence arrangement, whatever the nomenclature, would be pure and simple suicide.

On the other hand, Mrs Gandhi's emphasis on the development of the economic strength of the countries concerned, with mutual regional cooperation as its cornerstone, does commend itself as a suitable solution of the present problem. It will not only ensure national sovereignty of the countries of the region, but will simultaneously and Commensurately enhance their national defence potential.

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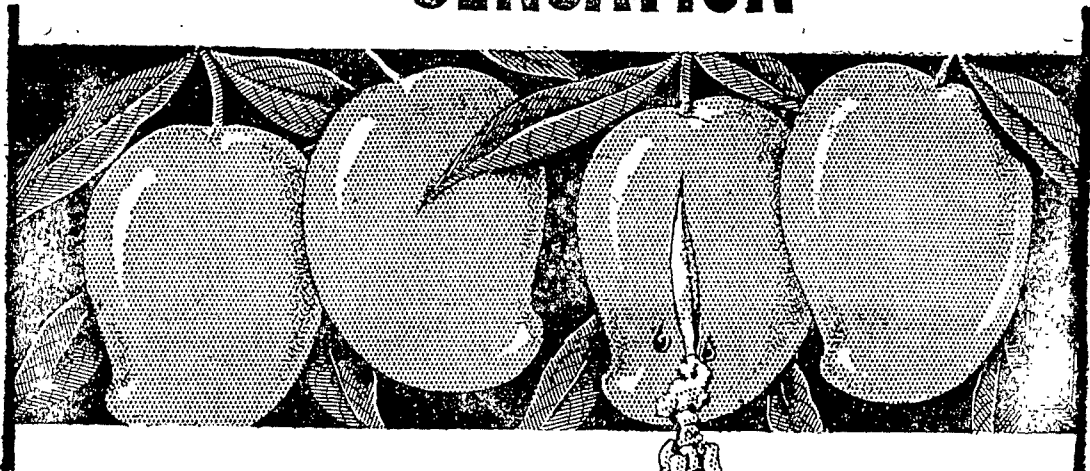
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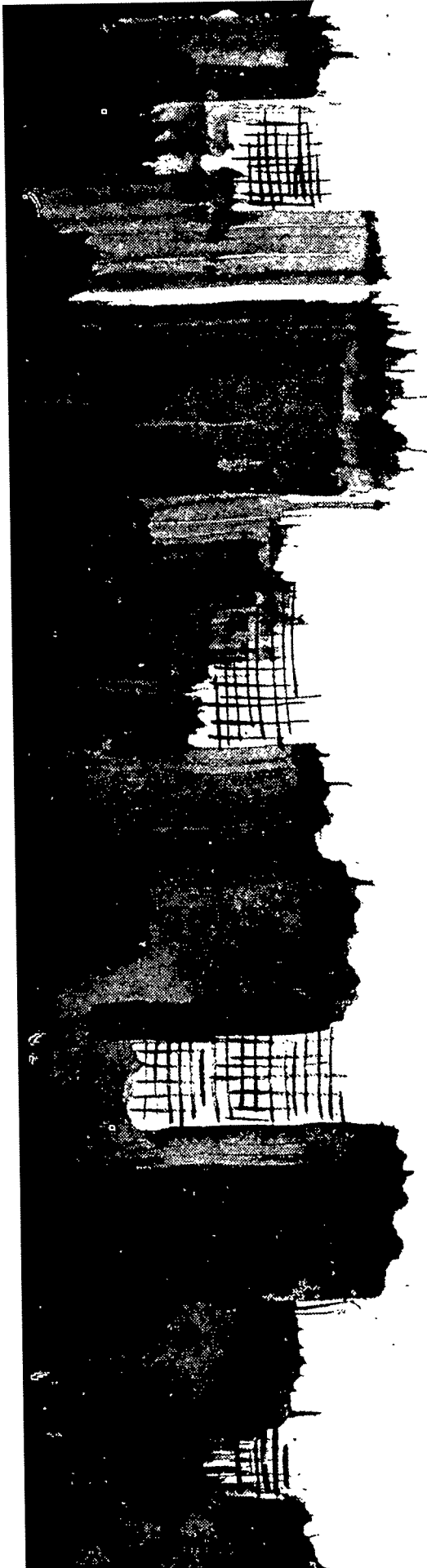
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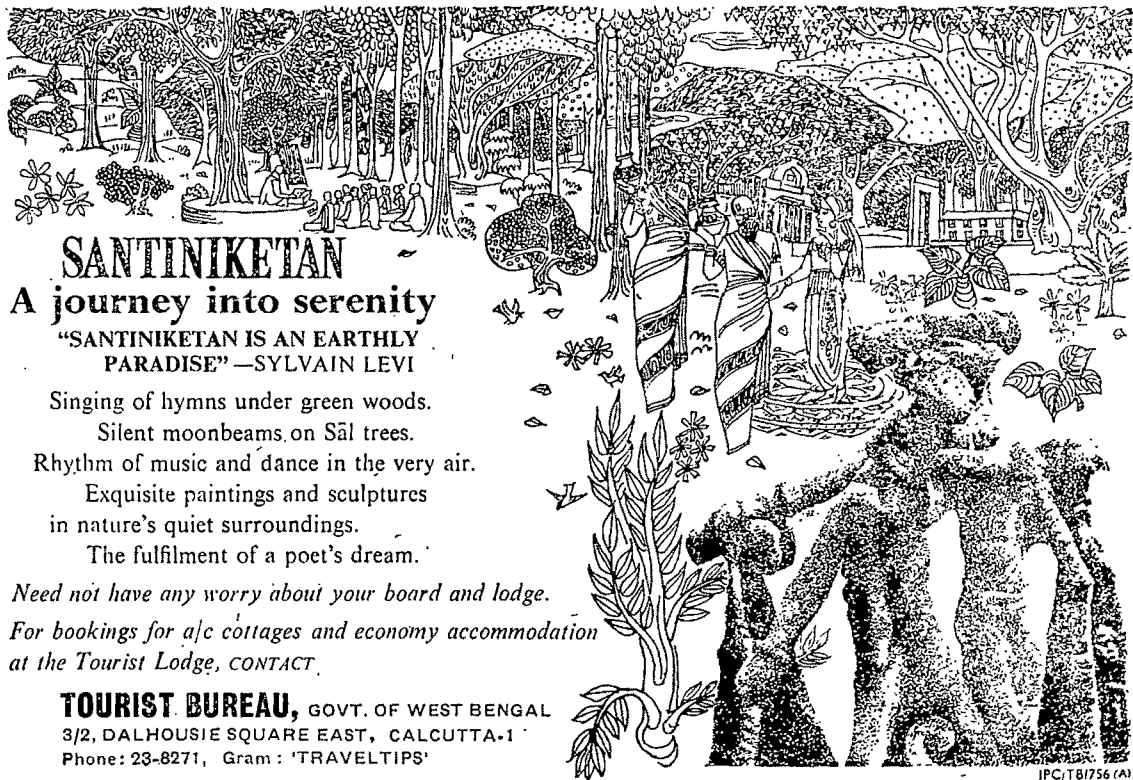
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GOVERNMENT ON TRIAL

IT is universally recognised that the National Integration Council at its Srinagar meeting last week achieved a great deal more than had been expected of it. It is true that within the short time available

it could not go in depth into the many kinds of threats to national unity and solidarity that have been taking shape in the country, often enough with overt or covert encouragement from politicians in power and sections of the bureaucracy. But the biggest single threat to national identity and cohesion as well as to the secular-democratic foundation of our polity is posed by the forces of communalism, and the Council despite its composition was able to focus national attention sharply on this and unanimously suggest specific measures to deal with it, however halting or inadequate these may appear to be in the context of the magnitude of the problem and the extent of ramifications of the communal elements.

Alongside satisfaction that at long last the Government and many of the major political parties in the country, as also intellectuals and other sections represented at Srinagar, have shown awareness of the need to counter the activities of the communal forces in a massive way through administrative action as well as propaganda, an air of scepticism is discernible. The reason is that the decisions taken by the Integration Council will have to be implemented by the very politicians and bureaucrats who in the past have utterly failed to put down communal propaganda and invariably waited for riots to assume ugly proportions before moving in. Till some time back the Government had enormous powers under

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the Emergency but these were not used to curb communal hate-mongering and not-so-subtle incitement to murder, loot and arson directed against a particular community. It is well known that it was not lack of powers which prevented the authorities from taking prompt and timely action to protect the life and property of every citizen regardless of religion, creed or caste. At the Council meeting the Jana Sangh and the RSS were openly accused of activities inimical to national unity; and these charges had been levelled earlier also by responsible political and other leaders. If despite all this communal propaganda had been carried on with impunity and without any attempt at secrecy, it was due partly to official indifference or connivance and partly to the respectability conferred upon communal organisations by political parties in search of opportunistic alliances. But the most important aspect of the matter is certainly the Government's failure to act firmly, leading to the legitimate inference that the communalists had friends and sympathisers in the seats of power and that these elements had also successfully infiltrated into the administration at various levels.

In this background, the doubts prevailing about the capacity or willingness of the country's administrators to carry out in full and without reservation the decisions of the National Integration Council are understandable. Definition of communal activity may be useful to conduct cases in the courts after the administration has acted against communal elements; but in the absence of the will to act, no definition on the statute book, however elaborate, will be of any significance or use. Nor will amendments to the Indian Penal Code and other laws mean much unless the law and order machinery is fully geared to the task of dealing with communal elements with an iron hand. The proposed special intelligence units at the Central and State levels to keep a close watch on the activities of communal elements can be useful only to the extent the Union and State Governments are determined to forestall communal mischief and punish offenders, unmindful of pressure. In a smaller sphere the same is true of the Council's call for stern action against organisations like the different Senas which set one group of citizens against another.

Thus, the test of the success of the Srinagar session of the National Integration Council will depend entirely on how its decisions are implemented by the authorities. It must be noted here that although three Chief Ministers strongly pleaded for a straight ban on communal parties, the Council could not find its way to accepting the plea. It has further been reported that during the discussions in the Committee on Communal Aspects the bureaucrats of the Union Home Ministry present tried their best to water down the decisions. It is precisely these bureaucrats on whom the Government will have to depend for the implementation of the Srinagar decisions. In the States there are similar problems, not only in relation to the attitude to the communal forces but also in respect of handling of other kinds of divisive tendencies. It is no secret that certain

Chief Ministers have taken sectarian positions on particular issues—as in the case of the Assam hill people's agitation and the Maharashtra-Mysore boundary demarcation dispute. Politicians in power as well as important elements in the law and order machinery in some States have been accused by the victims of openly encouraging hooligan elements on the rampage, as in the case of the Shiv Sena. In UP a political party is known to have used its brief stay in office to bring communal elements into the administrative machinery in a big way. While some top Congressmen have given clear indications of their communal outlook, even some progressive parties have not been averse to hobnobbing with communal and chauvinistic groups for the sake of temporary political advantage.

More than anyone else, however, it is the Government that is now on trial. The Prime Minister deserves high praise for the way she called the meeting of the Integration Council and guided its deliberations. So do some of the other participants at the meeting who refused to mince words in identifying the perpetrators of communal mischief. But their achievements will surely come to nought if from now on the decisions do not begin to get implemented at all levels. There may not be much resistance to amendment of the laws or to declarations of intent; but we can be sure that massive pressure will be mounted on the administration to prevent any firm action to identify and punish instigators of communal hatred and violence. How far can the Prime Minister and those of her colleagues who seek to safeguard the secular base of our democracy resist these pressures and act with determination? This is the question to which the people will earnestly seek an answer in the actions of the Central and State Governments in the coming period.

It is clear that the first target of attack in this respect must be the rags miscalled newspapers whose sole purpose is to spread communal poison by means of false, distorted, alarmist and mischievously worded news items and comments calculated to inflame feelings of animosity against a particular community. Although Union Information Minister K. K. Shah has declared that the Government's follow-up action on the Integration Council's proposals in this regard will be "quick and bold," his statement at his press conference on Monday that the conduct of any journalist found erring will be brought to the notice of the Press Council will cause disquiet. Apart from the fact that the Press Council's fate is yet uncertain and in any case it cannot be an effective influence on the Press for long years to come, the kind of action required to put an end to communal propaganda is not the soliciting of a censure by the Press Council or blacklisting by an accreditation committee. The main thing is to take penal action against offenders, and this is the purpose of the proposal to amend the Penal Code, as admitted by Sri Shah himself. Many newspapers and periodicals, including some recognised as the mouthpieces of particular parties, have been continuously engaged in the kind of pro-

paganda which the Integration Council wants to stop. The elements owning and running these journals are not the kind to pay heed to Sri Shah's pious call for responsible behaviour. Unless the Government firmly decides that it will not allow itself to be sidetracked but will seek out hate-mongers and instigators of violence and get them exemplary punishment, the Integration Council's

decisions will be reduced to nullity.

It is now for the Government to show that it means business; once the people are convinced that action has been set in motion, it may be expected that all the secular democratic forces in the land will rally behind the Government to end the communal menace, irrespective of party affiliations and differences over political and economic questions.

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

TOWARDS INTEGRATION

AN air of scepticism prevailed on the eve of the National Integration Council's session at Srinagar. The general belief was that the session would provide yet another occasion for high-sounding speeches by a variety of leaders, the totality of which would amount to very little. The recent spate of communal riots in the country only accentuated these feelings.

The outcome of the three-day Council meeting stood in contrast to these forebodings. Instead of becoming a platform for hollow declarations, the Council has given a clear orientation and a programme for action, especially for dealing with the communal menace. Far from being a bedlam of noises the Council meeting produced striking unanimity and reconciliation of the major political parties on this platform. These achievements alone made the NIC session a phenomenon not witnessed before on the national plane.

However, an even more vital aspect emerging from the Srinagar meeting is the creation of machinery to serve as a watchdog body for ensuring that the decisions taken are followed up and implemented.

A closer look at the Council's work may help a better understanding of its achievements and the likely impact on the pattern of national events. The main results of the session are embodied in the Declaration of Objectives and the three reports of the committees set up by the Council during the session. Of the documents, the report of the committee on communal aspects is perhaps the most significant in the context of the current national situation.

The report is a precise and comprehensive programme for action on the governmental and popular planes to deal with the menace of communalism. These measures include a virtual ban on communal propaganda as well as tightening up of the administra-

tive apparatus, including the police agencies. The move to fix individual responsibility on district officials for the maintenance of communal harmony is a notable feature. Besides preventive and punitive measures, the report also proposes a number of steps in a wider context to eliminate communalism. Among these proposals is one for amending the law to punish all communal activity and to bring within its scope political parties as well as the press. More thorough-going eradication of communalism is proposed through the imparting of secular education and formation of joint committees of all sections of people at different levels. The measures proposed, in fact, hardly leave out any field of activity connected in any way with the war on communalism.

How is it that the NIC was able to adopt these comprehensive and concrete proposals to deal with communalism? Is

there an assurance that they will be implemented fully? While obviously it would be too much to expect swift and automatic execution of the comprehensive proposals of the NIC, the process which led to their adoption in the Committee and the NIC is interesting. The atmosphere in the Council's deliberations was businesslike, in contrast to similar occasions in the past, the focus was sharply on the communal problem, which the Prime Minister in her keynote address described as the "biggest menace" facing the country. The deliberations at the plenary meetings of the NIC revealed a general awareness that the problems the country faced brooked no delay and there was urgent need for concrete action. This awareness was reflected in the proceedings of the NIC as well as in the procedure devised for committee work, which was most suitable for producing specific decisions within the short time available.

It was however natural that there should have been divergence in approach to a number of problems—linguistic, regional, communal and others. Broadly, the Council's composition fell into three categories: Political parties, university and educational leaders, and public figures. While the national political parties had their standpoints to uphold on most of the issues, the latter two categories could more easily adapt themselves and exert an influence which could be substantial in marginal situations. At the Srinagar session, educational leaders played a notable part in creating an understanding

and devising an approach which would help the Council overcome political deadlock.

This was in evidence in relation to the communal problem. Following the Prime Minister's opening address laying special stress on immediate steps to deal with communalism, the atmosphere rapidly sharpened. The CPI representative, Sri Bhupesh Gupta, came to the session with the view that since the Council could not deal with all problems of national integration, priority should be given to the communal question. He not only launched a sharp attack on communal trends, but named the main groups and parties which were the organisers of these trends and tensions. He mentioned the Jana Sangh and the RSS as the principal parties responsible for engendering communal tensions. He also mentioned the Jamaat-i-Islami and Majlis-e-Mushawarat in this context, though on a lower key, and outlined a number of specific measures to curb the menace.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta's stinging attack on communal parties did create a piquant situation as one of the major parties named—the Jana Sangh—was a participant. In any other circumstances a sharp confrontation would have been unavoidable. But it was characteristic of the atmosphere prevailing at the Srinagar meeting that no such thing happened. Sri Atal Bihari Vajpayee maintained a defensive posture all through, and the only occasion when he retorted was when Smt. Subhadra Joshi repeated even more sharply the charge

that the RSS and the Jana Sangh were responsible for the propagation of communalism. Sri Vajpayee had good reason to take a defensive stand since there was near-unanimity in the Council on the need for firm action to curb communalism. The most lukewarm was perhaps the Home Minister, Sri Y. B. Chavan, who felt the "thinking" of the people was solely responsible for communal violence. But the swing came when a number of Congress strongmen and Chief Ministers were even more outspoken than the CPI spokesman in attacking communal parties.

Sri Sukhadia, Rajasthan Chief Minister, asked for an outright ban on all communal parties and activities. Two other Chief Ministers, Sri V. P. Naik and Sri Brahmananda Reddy, complimented Sri Bhupesh Gupta. In the committee on communal aspects, where they sat together with Sri Vajpayee and Sri Bhupesh Gupta, they sought to strengthen and elaborate the CPI representative's proposals against communalism. In fact, it would be correct to describe these two Chief Ministers as co-architects of the committee's report on steps to deal with communalism. Sri Lachhman Singh Gill also joined the attack on communal parties functioning as "cultural organisations".

Notable also was what may be described as the "ideological" concept. Sri Vajpayee's main contribution was to project a specific concept of India and communalism, in line with the known ideas of his party. His projection of India and its culture was of ancient Bharat and its culture. The

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word "Sanskriti" was not used (Sri Vajpayee spoke in English) but the formulations were no different. It was left to Dr A. Alim and Sri Gajendrageadkar to demolish this concept. Sri Humayun Kabir also lent his weight. The educational leaders brought out clearly the falsity of this concept and its dangers. They put forward the alternative view of a composite Indian culture, which consisted not only of ancient traditions but also of the middle period—the Muslim period—and the period of struggle against British rule.

The importance of these contributions in determining the shape of the Council's actions can hardly be overestimated.

An important part of the "practical steps" evolved by the Council is the decision to make communal propaganda and activities a cognisable offence by suitably amending Section 153 of the Indian Penal Code. Two other measures directed at eradicating communalism in the field of education and preventing communal propaganda also fall in this category. Implementation of these recommendations will depend upon what exactly is considered to constitute communal propaganda. Fears that such a measure may be utilised to prevent even propaganda in religious places aimed at strengthening communal harmony were expressed at the Council meeting, especially in the Committee on Communal Aspects. For instance, will Sheikh Abdullah's speeches from the religious shrine of Hazratbal and those of Sant Fateh Singh in the Gurdwaras constitute a violation of such a provision? These are questions that the Government will have to consider now.

A major decision was that to set up a permanent Standing Committee to constantly review and watch implementation of the Council's decisions. The ten-member Committee, of which the Prime Minister and the Home Minister will be members, along with the chairman of the three committees set up by the Council on communal, regional and educational aspects, will impart continuity to the Council which in the past receded into background

after making pompous declarations.

The tone for the Council session was set by the Prime Minister when in her inaugural address she pinpointed communal violence as the "biggest menace" facing the nation and called for a "minimum programme" of action to combat communal violence. Such a programme, she said, would become the rallying point for all rational, honest men on a national scale. Not only were the Prime Minister's expectations more than fulfilled at Srinagar, but the decisions have "more than satisfied" even Left critics of the Government.

A measure of success of the anti-communal participants of the Council was provided by the business-like discussions in which the stress was on consensus rather than on majority decisions. That this consensus was not easy to reach was evident at the end of the conference when Sri Morarji Desai struck a discordant note, favouring implementation of majority decisions and frowning on the tendency to seek unanimity.

The decks having been cleared with the rejection of the ideological posture advanced by the conservatives, it was left to Sri Bhupesh Gupta to impart to the deliberations a business-like approach by proposing his six-point plan to curb communalism. Sri Gupta's plan, which received wide support from the members became the basis for the work of the Committee set up to consider the communal aspects of integration. What happened in the committee, having members with such diverse viewpoints as those of Sri Vajpayee and Sri Bhupesh Gupta, had a vital

bearing on the success of the Council deliberations. If the committee achieved unanimity, it was because the anti-communal parties and individuals worked concertedly and with mutual understanding. While the anti-communalists within the Congress, especially those close to the Prime Minister, unreservedly extended support to Sri Bhupesh Gupta, there was evidence of lack of coordination among the Leftists.

The gains for the emerging nation-wide front against communalism will be hard to gauge correctly without analysing the sort of hard work done at the session by such men and women, both aligned and unaligned, as Smt Subhadra Joshi of the Congress and Dr Gajendragadkar, Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University. Without mincing words, Smt Joshi placed the sharp poser before the session: How would you expect the Home Ministry to take action against communal parties, if the national leaders even at a closed-door meeting decline to name the parties behind the communal riots? She did not leave it at that but levelled charges against the Jana Sangh and the RSS.

Another factor which helped in shaping a new perspective was the demand for a ban on parties advocating communalism, especially the RSS and other militant communal organisations. It was not Sri Bhupesh Gupta and Smt Subhadra Joshi carrying on a fight on this issue. This demand was supported by Congress President Nijalingappa himself, and the Chief Ministers of Rajasthan and Punjab.

—Observer

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The article "Bihar's Second UF Govt." appearing on Page 15 was written and printed before the resignation of the Bhola Paswan Government. It is an assessment of the situation which prevailed in the state over last week-end.

—Editor

Gill Government and Democracy

SATYAPAL DANG

It was November 21 last year, the first day of the Winter Session of the Punjab Assembly, that Mr Lachhman Singh Gill announced on the floor of the House the defection of 17 MLAs headed by himself from the United Front and the formation of a new Party called the Janta Party. On the same day UF Chief Minister Gurnam Singh submitted the resignation of his Government and demanded mid-term elections. This sound advice was rejected by the Governor who took his orders from New Delhi and on November 25 a minority, all-defector Government with chief defector Gill as the Chief Minister was sworn in. In the history of parliamentary democracy in India, it was an entirely new type of Government—except for the P.C. Ghosh Government in West Bengal which came into existence almost simultaneously with the Gill Government in Punjab. Another similar Government headed by Sri B.P. Mandal was formed in Bihar a little later.

It is true that some years ago in Kerala the PSP legislators—a minority in the then Kerala Assembly—formed a Government that lasted many months. As in the case of the defector Governments in Punjab, Bengal and Bihar, the PSP minority Government in Kerala also was put in power by the Congress which itself kept out of the Government but ensured a majority in the Assembly for the minority Government. There is, however, a vital difference between the old Thanu Pillai Government in Kerala and the Gill Government in Punjab. In Kerala the Congress-supported minority Government

was formed by a party which existed both outside and inside the Assembly, which had fought the elections on the basis of a programme and policy, and which in fact was part of a recognized all-India Party with a declared programme as also a proper constitution.

The Gill Government, on the other hand, is the Government of a "Party" which is not only in minority in the Assembly but which in fact is not a party at all. It was not in existence during the preceding elections and the question of its having sought a mandate from the voters does not arise. It has no programme or policy. No one knows what type of constitution, if any, it has. Some top Congress leaders of Punjab and Sri Gill himself have now admitted that it has no existence outside the Assembly. The so-called Janta Party is in fact merely a collection of a few power-hungry politicians who have no hesitation in being or becoming faithful servants of vested interests and tools of the Congress Party if thereby they can get what they want for themselves. The P.C. Ghosh Government in Bengal and the Mandal Ministry in Bihar too belonged to this category. Those two however could not last despite all the efforts of the Congress. The Gill Government, on the other hand, has managed to survive and has already lasted about seven months.

Fruitful Review

It will certainly be fruitful to review how the existence of this type of Government has affected the functioning and development of parliamentary institutions and

sound parliamentary conventions.

* * *

Apart from the right to vote, the common people do not come into the picture very much as far as running of the Government or day-to-day administration is concerned. Between two elections, a vigilant Opposition in the Legislature is supposed to keep the Government alive to the sentiments of the people. Opposition parties are expected to voice the grievance of the people through questions, call-attention motions, adjournment motions, etc. They are supposed to X-ray the major policies of the Government and expose their weakness during discussions on the Governor's Address, the Budget, the Appropriation Bill, etc., which also offer opportunities to raise specific grievances—as for instance when grants are discussed. They are expected to scrutinise carefully all legislative—financial or other—measures brought up by the Government and to make known their views in the course of discussions on them. Thus regular and proper functioning of the legislature with the Opposition able to work freely is a very important aspect of parliamentary democracy.

Under the Constitution of India, the power to summon the Legislature from time to time and to prorogue it vests in the Governor. As Constitutional head, however, the Governor is expected to exercise this power only on the advice of the Council of Ministers acting through its Chief Minister. In other words, the power of the State Government over the functioning of the Legislature is vast. One limitation placed by the Consti-

tution is that the Legislature must not be not-in-session for more than 6 months. The limitation is not very serious because even a day's session after 6 months will meet the requirements of the Constitution. The other limitation follows from the provision in the Constitution that no money can be spent by the Government except in accordance with the Appropriation Act or Vote-on-Account passed by the Legislature, and these must be passed in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Constitution itself. Thus, subject to this compulsion, proper functioning of the Legislature is the responsibility of the Government of the day and depends upon its good sense and loyalty to parliamentary institutions.

Legislature Paralysed

How has the Gill Government discharged this vital responsibility enjoined upon it by the Constitution of India?

Without fear of contradiction it can be said that instead of enabling the legislature to function properly the Gill Government has with impunity paralysed it.

The Winter Session of the Punjab Assembly which began on November 21 was adjourned the same day because of the situation created by defections. It met again on December 4 after Sri Gill had been sworn in as Chief Minister. It was suddenly adjourned sine die on December 17 and was subsequently prorogued.

The next Budget Session began on February 22 this year. On March 4 the Speaker adjourned the House for 2 months on grounds of grave disorder. The Governor prorogued it on March 11 and then re-summoned it for March 18. What happened on that day is well known. With police and goondas inside the Chamber, the Budget was declared passed within half an hour—"a world record", to use Sri Chagla's words. The session was then adjourned to April 5. Before that, however, the Government had second thoughts and on its advice the session was prorogued.

Under the orders of the Supreme Court, the Assembly was summoned again on May 20. However, it was adjourned sine die on May 22 and was subsequently prorogued (The Business Advisory Committee had planned it till May 29).

From the above it will be clear that instead of working the Legislature, the Gill Government has effectively paralysed it. Sri Gill has been justifying this with the argument that "there is no business for the Legislature". Even apart from the fact that the Budget was passed within half an hour on March 18, this plea of Sri Gill has been false all along. This became clear when the Session had to be summoned on May 20 in accordance with the assurance given to the Supreme Court on behalf of the Punjab Government by its counsel.

No one had any doubt that the Supreme Court wanted the Legislature to meet so that it could have an opportunity to discuss the situation arising out of invalidation of the Appropriation Acts by the High Court and to rectify the same if it had the power to do so. Sri Gill, however, declared that the Assembly would discuss many other things but not the Budget. The agenda issued on May 16, contained a number of items which had been pending for a long time. This gave the lie to Sri Gill's oft-repeated assertion that the session was not being called because there was no agenda. Subsequently vote-on-account was also included in the agenda but was chopped off as soon as it was known that the Supreme Court had stayed the operation of the High Court judgment.

Pending Agenda

When the session was adjourned sine die, a good deal of the agenda was still pending. Further, even before the session was prorogued, the Local Self-Government Minister announced that the Government was ready with an Ordinance to amend the Municipal Act, while in an earlier session a comprehensive Municipal Bill to replace the present Act had been withdrawn. There is also the fact that despite demands by

the Opposition, the Assembly has not been allowed to discuss such important matters as the Report of the Police Commission, Report of the Panchayati Raj team, Reports of the Punjab State Electricity Board, etc. Out to avoid facing the Legislature except when it cannot be helped, Sri Gill even tried to hold elections to the Public Accounts Committee and the Estimates Committee by postal ballot in clear violation of the rules of the Assembly.

There can thus be no doubt that the Legislature has been paralysed because the minority Government is afraid of facing it.

All those who want parliamentary democracy to take strong roots in India would agree that this calls for the development of healthy conventions. By arresting certain legislators on the eve of the March 18 Session and the attempted arrest of many other MLAs, by his refusal to resign even after the High Court judgment, etc., Sri Gill has been undermining such development and has thereby harmed the growth of parliamentary democracy in the State.

No Rule of Law

"Rule of Law" is said to be another hallmark of parliamentary democracy. But there has been no such thing in Punjab ever since the Gill Government was installed in power. Typical facts given below reveal the state of affairs in Punjab.

1. To prevent black flag demonstrations against Sri Gill and his colleagues, hundreds of political workers were kept in illegal police custody for 2 to 3 days at a time without any FIR etc. This happened throughout the State and on a very big scale. Peaceful demonstrators have been lathi-charged, which fact however has been blatantly and shamelessly denied in the Assembly.

2. Hundreds of political workers have been implicated in false cases. Even political murders have taken place.

3. When the United Front announced a peaceful demonstration in Chandigarh on January 21, unwritten but strict orders were issued to the district authorities

to prevent people from proceeding to Chandigarh. One method used by the police was to forcibly remove from trains and buses all those who had tickets for Chandigarh.

Freedom to demonstrate, to agitate, to go on peaceful strike, etc. is said to be another essential feature of parliamentary democracy. Under Congress rule, before March 1967, again and again severe restrictions were placed on these rights of the people. The Gill Government—Congress rule by proxy—has gone one step further and has sought to negate these rights altogether. An outstanding example is provided by the attitude of the Government towards the 4-day strike of Punjab Roadways employees. The demand of the strikers was that the Government should implement the agreement it had arrived at with the union. The amount involved was only about Rs 3 lakhs. Hundreds were arrested and prosecuted on criminal charges. The services of hundreds were terminated. Hundreds were suspended. For the first time since 1947, workers on strike—by the hundred—were sent to the notorious interrogation centre in Amritsar and were subjected to third degree methods and inhuman torture to extract information from them as to who asked them to go on strike, what their political leanings were, etc.

Committees Dissolved

Earlier we have noted that under Parliamentary democracy, common people do not have much say in the day-to-day work of Government. To a small extent, this defect can be remedied by setting up popular committees at different levels. During the period of the United Front Ministry, such committees were set up for the Food and Supplies Department as also some other departments. These, as also the District Grievances Committees, included representatives of all parties including the Congress. As far as the Food Advisory Committees were concerned, it was even proposed to vest certain statutory powers in them. One of the first acts of the Gill

Government was to dissolve these committees. The new District Grievances Committees set up after some time did not include representatives of any of the Opposition parties, while the Congress has been given representation in every such committee.

Record of Govt.

Such is the record of the Gill Government with regard to the functioning of democracy. A brief mention may be made of some other aspects of Sri Gill's rule.

1. Introduction of religious prayers in schools, and State visit of Mahesh Yogi and his entourage to "help" the Government to fight corruption are two examples of how Sri Gill has sought to undermine the secular character of our democracy. In the political field Sri Gill has patronized and encouraged the Akali Dal (Tara Singh group) whose declared objective is a Sikh Homeland.

2. Corruption at the official and Ministerial level has surpassed all records. It is being said that the present regime has 'achieved' in seven months what Kairon and his sons could not in eight years.

3. Sri Gill's henchmen in the bureaucracy and the police have been given promotions and placed in key positions. Officers who have insisted on recording their independent opinions or have refused to commit blatantly illegal acts have been penalized. One IAS Secretary had to go to Delhi because he would not agree to "his" views on the question of prices of wheat being recorded, contrary to what they really were. The seniormost DIG police was shifted from his post of DIG-CID and made DIG Home Guards through orders served on him in the middle of the night. It is alleged that this was done because he did not agree to fabricate a false case against some former Ministers and also because Sri Gill wanted a "trusted" man in this key position.

Some other senior IAS officers have been made to proceed on long leave. On the other hand, one junior PCS officer was made a member of the Public

Service Commission within days of Sri Gill's coming to power. He has now been made the Chairman of the Commission superseding senior members. When the United Front Ministry was in power, Sri Gill demanded that the rank of Commissioner be abolished. After becoming Chief Minister, he has promoted one of his favourite IAS officers to this rank. Deputy Commissioners are being transferred from one district to another. Some are being posted in the Secretariat, while officers from the Secretariat are being sent to the districts. A Deputy Secretary against whom an enquiry is pending for smuggling foodgrains has been posted as a Deputy Commissioner.

Salary Contrasts

4. The PCS officers on the Executive side have been given a handsome pay rise while those on the Judicial side have been denied the same. Salaries of police officers have been increased, while constables have been denied the same. While low-paid Class IV employees whose annual increment is 0.50 paise are asked to await the report of the Pay Commission, the salaries of the members and Chairman of the Public Service Commission have been increased by Rs 450 p.m. and Rs 250 p.m. respectively. MLAs too have been given a rise of Rs 100 p.m. Low-paid categories like Cooperative Sub-Inspectors are being forced to resort to struggles. Assurances given to private school teachers that a law would be enacted to guarantee their security of service have not been fulfilled.

5. The Bill which the United Front Ministry had decided to bring forward to link the wages of industrial workers with the cost of living index has been sabotaged. The only Labour Court in the State is unable to function, because it is without a presiding officer from March 1. It is widely rumoured that the previous presiding officer was suddenly refused extension because he refused to oblige a Minister.

6. Decision of the UF Government to distribute evacuee

surplus land among Scheduled Caste people has not been implemented.

7. The manner in which public money is spent will be clear from the following two reports in the *Tribune*:

(a) "Chandigarh, June 4: The Punjab Cabinet decided today to buy a helicopter for the use of Ministers and other Senior Officers. If not the first, Punjab will be one of the few States to use a State-owned helicopter for tours, though it is a small State about 200 miles in length." (*The Tribune*—June 6, 1968)!

(b) "Ferozepur, June 15: The district authorities have failed to secure an elephant for Chief Minister Lachhman Singh Gill for his three-day tour of the Moga sub-division. The desire for an elephant has been expressed by the Chief Minister himself. The authorities have contacted even some former princes, but their efforts have not succeeded so far. Moga is the home division of Mr Gill. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly from Dharamkot....." (*The Tribune*, June 15, 1968)

8. The crime situation has deteriorated to an alarming extent.

Devil's Due

As even the devil must be given his due, let us mention those decisions of the Gill Government for which it claims or can claim some credit.

1. It claims that it is taking vigorous steps to make Punjabi the language of administration of the State. This is only partially true. Sri Gill would not like the people to know that during the UF Ministry he deliberately delayed and sabotaged an early decision obviously with the intention of being able to claim credit when he became the defector Chief Minister.

2. It claims that it has decided to increase the minimum pension for political sufferers from Rs 15 to Rs 25 p.m. The fact is that the increase was decided first during the period of the UF Ministry. Its finalization and implementation was delayed by the Gill Ministry. Another decision taken during the period

of the UF Ministry was to scrutinize the list of those getting these pensions with a view to removing all undeserving cases. This seems to have been put in cold storage.

3. It is claimed that it has taken a radical decision to reduce the retirement age of Government employees from 58 to 55. In principle this decision too was taken when the UF was in power.

4. The Gill Government has decided to link every village with a main road by means of metallized link roads within 2 years. The decision is no doubt praiseworthy if it really gets implemented and not at the cost of main roads.

Reverting to the question of the harm done to democracy by the Gill Government, its record is so bad that even Sri Chavan had to say that the experience of minority Governments had not proved a success and that they had been harmful to democracy.

Why, then, do Sri Chavan and his colleagues in the Congress High Command continue to support the Gill Government and prevent its downfall—even though a section of the Punjab Congress wants to get rid of it? The answer is not difficult to find.

Sri Gill has been faithfully serving the vested interests in the State—the big mill-owners, the transport kings, the big traders, etc. In this respect he has not given any cause for complaint to the Congress High Command. He in fact has dutifully carried

out all orders of the High Command. The High Command, whatever public postures it may have to adopt, is really not much worried about the fate of democracy. It has itself not hesitated to undermine the same when it ceased to be a cover for the rule of vested interests and was sought to be utilised by people.

A section of the Congress leaders in Punjab are annoyed with Sri Gill because he has been going about the job too crudely. Some are not prepared to go that far for fear of further isolation. Some are angry with Sri Gill because he has been using the strings of power to benefit his own men. Sri Gill has been quite obedient to the High Command but has cleverly utilised his power as well as the unwillingness of Congress leaders to face mid-term elections to spilt and divide the Punjab Congress and to continue in power with the help of the High Command. Those in the Punjab Congress who want to withdraw support to Sri Gill are prepared neither to revolt against the High Command nor to face mid-term elections. And the High Command does not think that a Congress Government is possible just now. The weakness of the political situation in Punjab lies in the absence of a powerful movement as was built up in Bengal to force Sri Gill out and to ensure mid-term elections. Despite this weakness, however, Sri Gill is not likely to last long.

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Jana Sangh's Dilemma in Uttar Pradesh

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE decision of the Uttar Pradesh State Jana Sangh at its recent Aligarh meet to contest all seats in the forthcoming mid-term elections, highlights a new phase in the State politics. This reactionary communal group had not only taken a secular posture but has also embarked upon a grandiose plan to capture power in Uttar Pradesh.

The decision was taken after the elections to the Corporations of four major towns of UP in which the Congress and the Jana Sangh contested all the seats. The results were both interesting and revealing. They disclose the trends of voting in the urban areas which have been regarded as strongholds of Jana Sangh.

While the Congress won 91 seats, the Jana Sangh annexed 62, leaving far behind the other parties and groups including Independents whose mushroom growth had created difficult problems after every election.

The Congress regained its lost position in Lucknow by capturing 32 out of 62 seats, but was mauled by Jana Sangh in Varanasi where it got only six seats. However, the Congress retained its majority in Kanpur but lost to Jana Sangh in Agra. Out of the four Corporations, the Congress and the Jana Sangh have majorities in two each.

As compared to the performance of these parties in the last General Elections, the Congress lost in percentage of votes polled in three Corporation towns, but in Lucknow it improved its position from 23.18 per cent to 27.54 per cent. The Jana Sangh's poll percentage declined all along the line. While the Congress polled 24.95 per cent of votes, the Jana

Sangh could get only 16.06 per cent of votes polled in this election.

In the last General Elections, the Jana Sangh emerged as the second party in Uttar Pradesh. While the Congress returned 182 members, the Jana Sangh captured 99 seats in the State Assembly.

The rise of the Jana Sangh in the UP political scene is hardly a decade old. During the first General Election, it had put up 209 candidates and could win only two seats with 6.36 per cent of total votes polled. After five years, the number of Jana Sangh legislators increased to 17 with a voting percentage of 9.84. Later in 1962, it made further gains by winning 48 seats and thus became the main opposition party in the Vidhan Sabha.

Second Party

The wave of anti-Congressism on the eve of last General Election made the Jana Sangh the second party after the Congress in the UP Vidhan Sabha. It also became the major partner in the SVD Government formed after the defection of Sri Charan Singh and his group from the Congress.

The nucleus of the SVD in which both the Right and Left parties joined, was first formed during the last days of the previous Assembly. Election of the Communist leader Dr Z. A. Ahmed to the Rajya Sabha from UP was preceded by this new development in UP politics.

Soon after the last elections, the Opposition parties came together under leadership of the Independent MLA Sri Ram Chandra Vikal, to form the SVD which later constituted the first-

ever non-Congress Government in the State.

RSS Hardcore

Being the largest party in the coalition, the Jana Sangh forced the other parties to hand it over the key portfolios of Education, Cooperation, Power and Irrigation, Local Self-Government Department and Transport. It also insisted upon and got the Deputy Chief Ministership. In the wrangling for portfolios, the Jana Sangh negotiator managed to get the other parties to agree to hand over those departments which have direct public dealings. This was needed to widen the mass base of the Jana Sangh, but mainly of its hard core, the RSS.

Curiously, the Jana Sangh leaders in both the Vidhan Sabha and Vidhan Parishad, Sri Ganga Ram Talwar and Sri Pitambar Das, respectively, were not given any ministerial assignment. Instead the trusted RSS cadres, led by the former Deputy Mayor Ram Prakash Gupta were picked up. It was during Sri Gupta's regime that any scandals thrived in the Lucknow Corporation leading to its financial bankruptcy and eventual dissolution.

The ascendancy of the RSS in the Jana Sangh was so marked that the murmurs of discontent soon rose to crescendo. The cleavage in the Jana Sangh ranks became wide open when an MLA from Varanasi denounced the party and declared himself Independent. The Jana Sangh Deputy Leader in Vidhan Parishad Sri Shiv Prasad Singh also left the party and formed the Krishak Vidhayak Dal. Later he joined the Congress.

However, the first jolt came

to the Jana Sangh when its Transport Minister Sri Man Singh Jadav, was defeated in the election to the Vidhan Parishad, even failing to secure the votes of his own party MLAs. Another stalwart, Sri Madho Prasad Tripathi, former leader of Opposition, was also trounced. During the last days of the SVD regime, many cases of defections from the Jana Sangh were reported, but due to the sudden dissolution of the Assembly, their actual number could not be ascertained.

Administration Subverted

It is with a feeling of utter shame that the leaders of SVD coalition look at the past performance of their Jana Sangh ministerial colleagues. The Jana Sangh was keenly interested in strengthening the RSS base and for that it did not hesitate even to subvert the administration and pollute the entire education system in Uttar Pradesh.

It is widely known that the RSS bosses went out of their way even to accommodate those officers who were penalised by the Congress Government on serious charges of corruption. There is the case of the Executive Officer of Lucknow Corporation Sri A. N. Singh against whom, no less a person than Sri Charan Singh himself (when he was LSGD Minister in the Congress Government) had taken action. Sri A.N. Singh was not only reinstated but also promoted and kept in Lucknow. Similarly, there was the case of another official of the Cooperative Department who was promoted despite investigations against him by the Vigilance Commission.

In the Vidhan Sabha, members of all political parties, except of course, the Jana Sangh, accused the communalists with planting RSS cadres in the key posts of the vulnerable Cooperative Department. Its resources and premises were flagrantly used for massive rallies for this para-military fascist organisation.

It was also alleged that a circular letter was issued to all district units of the Jana Sangh to press for the inclusion of their supporters in the formation of so-called education committees.

There were reports that RSS members were appointed in the educational institutions to pervert the entire system of learning in the State by their reactionary and obscurantist system of teachings.

During the short-lived SVD regime, it was mainly the legislators belonging to the Leftist Parties and the Bharatiya Kranti Dal who participated in the Vidhan Sabha debates. The Jana Sangh Ministers and members maintained discreet silence throughout, except on one occasion when the LSGD Minister Sri Varmeshwar Pande, when he enthusiastically idolised Nazi Dictator Hitler as the "Greatest Man of the Age". He also radicalised the socialist goal of India as the road to "economic ruin".

The Jana Sangh Ministers adopted a double-faced policy in relation to several issues of public importance. While sitting in the Cabinet, they agreed with their colleagues, and in public their party took just the opposite line. This happened over the issues of procurement of foodgrains and handling of the Government employees' agitation. The Jana Sangh Ministers agreed to the procurement by the State, but the party units launched an agitation against the Government measures called upon the peasants to "wreck the Communist trap". They organised peasants' marches and gheraoed officials of their State government. Similarly, the Jana Sangh Ministers sided with Chief Minister Charan Singh in crushing the Government employees' agitation. But afraid of losing their popular support, their party was asked to show sympathy with the movement. However, these tactics were exposed, and even the pro-Jana Sangh Government employees openly denounced them.

Bulwark Against Popular Demands

Not only this, the Jana Sangh acted as a bulwark against popular demands of the people. In the Vidhan Sabha debate on police atrocities at the Kalagarh Dam, the Jana Sangh Ministers, along with the Chief Minister, vehemently defended the police outrage on workers. Action against the wayward and guilty

engineers of the Nanaksagar Dam tragedy was not allowed to be taken immediately despite reported orders of the Chief Minister. The Jana Sangh Ministers created the same atmosphere of corrupt Congress regime that the erring and inefficient officers can remain without any fear provided they supported their party.

In order to boost its image, the Jana Sangh got the abolition of urban landed property tax Act passed during the Budget session. But it was generally lukewarm and often hostile towards conceding other popular demands agreed to by the SVD parties.

Wrecked SVD

In the beginning, the Jana Sangh bosses thought that Sri Charan Singh would depend on their mercies to run the Government, and they wanted him to act as their rubber stamp. Disillusioned by Sri Charan Singh forming his own group, they decided to get rid of him and instead tried to impose Sri Ram Chandra Vikal as the leader of SVD after the Communists and the SSP Ministers had resigned from the Government.

Disgusted with all these antics of the Jana Sangh Ministers, Sri Charan Singh submitted the resignation of the SVD Ministry to the Governor.

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Bihar's Second UF Government

GIRISH MISHRA and BRAJ KUMAR PANDEY

WITH the decision of the SSP to join the Government in Bihar, the second United Front Government headed by Sri Bhola Paswan Shastri seems to have the strength and vigour to survive. The rumours about internal dissensions have for the time been set at rest and the business of defection and toppling is facing a slump. The Congress leaders are too involved in their organisational in-fighting to think of any other matter. Sri B.P. Mandal, the leader of the Shoshit Dal, has virtually given up all hope of being effective any more in Bihar politics. The Congress High Command is in no mood to take any risk for fear that whatever organisation is left may not remain intact.

When the discredited and unpopular Government of Sri B.P. Mandal fell, there were doubts about the formation of a new government of the United Front. There were three factors which were troubling the mind of the public. The first was the Central Government and its agent, the State Governor. The Congress leaders, who were facing the Aiyar Commission, did not leave any stone unturned to press for the imposition of President's Rule. Only Sri Mahesh Prasad Sinha, leader of the Congress Legislature Party, was against Central intervention. He had high hopes of becoming Chief Minister. A number of his own caste men, such as Sri Krishna Kant Singh, Sri Shiva Shankar Singh, Sri L.P. Shahi and Srimati Pratibha Sinha, had defected from the Congress and joined the newly-formed Loktantrik Dal. He wanted the blessings of the Central Congress leadership to persuade them to

come back and form the Government with the help of the Shoshit Dal and some other defectors. He did make gestures of friendship to the Raja of Ramgarh. But the Central Congress leadership, fearing a further split in the Congress, did not give its blessings to Sri Mahesh Prasad Sinha; nor did it agree to impose President's rule.

The Governor, when approached by the United Front to allow Sri Bhola Shastri to form the Government, wanted a common agreed programme of the Front. The people were surprised to see that the same Governor who did not care for any programme while inviting the rootless Shoshit Dal to form the Government nor bothered about democratic traditions and practices, was insisting on a programme-oriented Government. To meet the demand of the Governor, the constituents of the UF prepared a 17-point temporary programme.

Game Exposed

After the 17-point programme was announced, the Jana Sangh and other right-wing elements started the propaganda that the Leftist forces, particularly the CPI, had surrendered for the sake of sharing power because there was no mention of the protection of the rights of share-croppers, abolition of the zamindari rights of the Tatas, eradication of black-marketing and hoarding of foodgrains and other essential commodities, and giving Urdu its due place in the State.

But this game was exposed when the constituents of the UF formulated a 31-point permanent programme on April 27. The Jana Sangh in the beginning

put several obstacles in the way of expansion of the programme, but had to yield because of the pressures of the Left parties and the LTD. The Jana Sangh could not succeed in the disruption bid and it had to withdraw its demand for the inclusion of a ban on cow-slaughter and Christian missionaries, denationalisation of transport and removal of all restrictions on trade in foodgrains.

An examination of the 31-point programme shows that it is not only a victory for the Leftist forces but is an improvement on the 33-point programme of the Mahamaya Prasad Ministry. A few instances will suffice: The 22nd point in the new programme aims at abolition of the remnants of intermediary zamindari interests. In this way not only the Tatas' zamindari rights but other remnants of zamindari interests will be done away with. In the old programme, there was a mention of the development of Urdu only, but in the new programme, the 28th point calls for the development of all the languages spoken by the minorities in the State. Thus, the State will provide facilities for the development of not only Urdu, but also Mathili, Santhali, Bengali and Oriya. Now the Jana Sangh will not be able to play upon the sentiments of the Mathils, Bengalis and other linguistic groups.

In the old programme, there was no clear mention of protection of the rights of share-croppers. But the new programme clearly speaks of the completion of the unfinished tasks of land reforms, restoration to the tribals of the land illegally taken from them, giving occupancy rights to agricultural and landless labourers

on their homestead land, distribution of fallow land among the agricultural labourers and poor peasants, specially Harijans and tribals; abolition of land revenue on uneconomic holdings; and finally, implementation of the recommendations of the various commissions regarding Harijans, tribals and backward castes.

The new programme aims at the eradication of communalism and the protection of minorities.

Among the constituents of the UP, only the CPI and the Jana Sangh were able to finalize their lists of nominees to the Cabinet without delay.

The SSP, in spite of its declining prestige and strength, is divided into two groups headed by Sri Baswan Singh and Sri Suryanarayan Singh. While the former was in favour of joining the Government, the latter insisted on not joining it. Unseemly incidents took place at the executive committee meetings. At last, the central leadership of the PSP sent Sri Kamath to iron out the differences. Because of his efforts the PSP at last joined the Government. Its nominees in the Cabinet are Sri Ramapati Singh and Sri Hasibur Rahman. Sri Baswan Singh is not included because he is no longer a member of the Legislature.

Irresponsible Role

The SSP has again played its irresponsible role. The SSP is the second largest party in the Legislature. In the last Ministry it had the largest representation. It was expected that, being a Left party, it would play a constructive role. But because of its internal differences, muddled thinking on caste and opportunism, it so behaved as to lead to the fall of the Ministry. A section of the SSP legislators headed by Sri B. P. Mandal broke away from it. The SSP ministers could not establish a reputation for efficient handling of their portfolios. The muddled handling of the Education portfolio is a concrete example. Not only this, they opposed implicitly or explicitly the land reform measures proposed by CPI minister Indradeep Sinha.

When the Paswan Ministry

was formed, the SSP welcomed it and gave an assurance that it would join it without delay. But differences over the allocation of ministerial posts among the SSP aspirants has been delaying its joining the Government. In the SSP every legislator aspires to be a minister.

Obstacles in the Way

Sri Karpuri Thakur, Sri Ramanand Tiwary and Sri Kapildeo Singh were in favour of joining the Government without delay, but Sri Bhola Singh, whose nomination has been opposed not only by the dominant section of the SSP but by other constituents of the UF, started putting obstacles in the way. The central SSP leadership could not make up its mind and as a face-saving device, a number of oft-repeated pre-conditions were put before the Chief Minister. Regarding the pre-condition of giving 60 percent representation to backward castes, Harijans, women and tribals, the SSP has always expected others to follow its dictates, while it never cared to take all this into consideration while finalizing its own list of nominees. Sri Kishen Pattanayak, former MP, recently admitted in an article that the Bihar SSP leaders never seriously thought of implementing the 60 per cent representation principle. There the backward castes mean only Kurmis, Ahirs and Koeris and then only the educated sections of these castes. Sri Pattanayak frankly admits that neither the upper caste nor the backward caste leaders of the SSP have cared for class organisations of agricultural labourers and others. While distributing party tickets for the elections, the SSP never cares for its loudly proclaimed principles. The last Rajya Sabha election is a pointer.

The people were surprised when the SSP leaders put further pre-conditions. They did not know why the SSP representatives did not open their mouths at the meetings of the co-ordinating committee and why they signed the agreed programme without hesitation.

The recent election to the Lok Sabha from Madhepura of Sri B. P. Mandal has further lowered

the prestige of the SSP. Sri B.P. Mandal, supported by the Congress, inflicted a crushing defeat on the SSP nominee Dr K. K. Mandal. It is strange that the SSP could not find any candidate but Dr K. K. Mandal. It should be remembered that Dr Mandal was the Congress nominee in the last election. One does not know how Dr Mandal became a socialist overnight. The SSP did not have a dearth of candidates. It could have put up Sri B. N. Mandal—but the party did not want to disrupt family ties.

It is feared that there may be a further split in the SSP if the distribution of ministerial jobs is not tactfully handled by the leadership.

Hostile Activities

Sri Mahamaya Prasad Sinha has destroyed his own image by his attitude to the Paswan Ministry. When the Mandal Ministry fell, he expected to be installed as Chief Minister but the constituents of the Front did not approve of it in the changed political situation. He then began his hostile activities. The result was that he was left without any followers. The Raja of Ramgarh along with his followers left the BKD and revived the Janata Party. The Raja and his brothers then joined the Government. Sri Mahamaya Prasad Sinha failed to assess his own strength and utility to the Front. He did not have any inkling of the Raja's plan to leave him. During his Chief Ministership the Raja and his brother had derived maximum benefit. The got the desired portfolios and operated unfettered. Sri Mahamaya Prasad Sinha went out of the way to help them. Without taking the Cabinet into confidence, he ordered the withdrawal of cases against the Raja pending in Calcutta courts.

At present the BKD headed by Sri Mahamaya Prasad Sinha has severed all its connections with the UF. It has, besides Sri Sinha, three other members including former Shoshit Dal Ministers. It is not certain that the BKD will survive for long. Sri Sinha is talking of the third force, which
(Continued on Page 38)

Republican Constitution in the Struggle for Socialism—II

E. M. S. NAMBOODIRIPAD

20. Those who want to bring about radical socio-economic transformations through the "constitutional path" are thus faced with two difficulties. Firstly, if they happen to win a majority in the State Legislature (as has happened in a few cases), the power of the Centre is used against them. The use of this power may go to the extent of dismissal of the elected Ministry (as happened in Kerala in 1959 or in West Bengal in 1967). It may also happen that, if the elected Ministry is not so crudely dismissed, the radical measures it seeks to pilot through the Legislature are blocked (as happened in Kerala for the agrarian reform and educational bills in 1958-59). Or, it may also take the form of rejecting the legitimate demands of the State Government for food, financial assistance, an adequate share of industrial and other developments etc. Secondly, if the forces standing for radical socio-economic transformations are able to win a majority in Parliament and to form a radical Government at the Centre, they cannot carry out their programmes of radical changes in property relations unless and until the Constitution itself is amended in important directions. This will not be easy, but will be a protracted and difficult process. Not only is it technically difficult since an amendment to the Constitution requires that it is "passed in each House of Parliament by a majority of the total membership of that House and by a majority of not less than two-thirds of members of that House present and voting" (Art 368). Politically too, it involves a serious conflict between the champions of those social transformations and its opponents. The latter, as is well-known, are extremely powerful and have under their control all the media of publicity and propaganda through which they can confuse the people. They are also masters of the money purse which they can extensively utilise in order to mobilise considerable sections of the population against the attempted social transformations. It is therefore inevitable that clashes and conflicts take place among the people who are rallied behind the two camps—the champions and opponents of these social transformations. It is unrealistic to think that,

in such a situation of growing conflict between the two camps of the people, the parliamentary democratic system will be preserved intact and not be subverted, as has happened in several other countries.

21. This however, is not the only way in which the Constitution may break down. An equally serious threat to the smooth working of the Constitution emanates from the steadily deteriorating relation between the Centre and the States. It is just enough to mention the names of Kashmir, Nagaland, Mizoland, the Hill peoples of Assam, the Hindi and non-Hindi conflict and the insistent demand of all the States (including Congress-governed States) for greater power and greater share of the economic development of the country. Everyone of them is an explosive issue, some of which have, in fact, already reached the stage of veritable explosions. The longer the time taken to find a solution for any of these problems, the more complicated it becomes. On the other hand, every solution that is offered adds a new complexity to the problem which it did not have so far. Those who are trying to find solutions therefore have reached a veritable dead end.

22. The reason for this, according to our Party, is the totally unrealistic premise on which the Federal State structure has been built into the Constitution—the premise that a "strong and powerful Centre" is necessary for the preservation of the unity of the country. The division of functions between the Federal Centre and the federating units has been so arranged that the Essence of State power rests with the Centre, the States being vested with only outside manifestations of power. The entire field of economic development and planning; control over currency, finance prices and so on; the most elastic and expanding sources of revenue—all these are left to the Centre. It is arms the Centre with adequate power to lay down the economic and financial law for the States. Even in the management of those subjects which have formally been allocated to the States, the Centre is in a position to make the States subserve its dictates in the name of all-India "co-ordination", using for the purpose the absolute financial dependence of the States on the Centre. The Civil Services of the States—the agency through which the State Governments have to carry on the administration—are also controlled by the Centre which has built up a new edition of the old "steel frame" of the British rulers. While the Constitution

This is the second and concluding instalment of Sri Namboodiripad's Founder's Day Address at the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Poona June 8, 1968. The first instalment appeared in last week's Mainstream June 22, 1968.

itself had vested the Federal Centre with extensive powers, the eighteen years of its working has made further inroads into the powers of the States. In the face of this ever-expanding power of the Centre, the States have been put to the necessity of fighting for greater powers. This conflict between the aspirations of the States and the reality of the central power is leading to as big a conflict as the social conflicts between the rich and poor referred to above.

23. In order to have a proper understanding of this phenomenon, it is necessary to go into the history of how the federal idea got gradually involved itself. The birth of the federal idea should be seen against the background of the movement for the formation of linguistic States which had almost half a century of history before the Constituent Assembly started its work of framing the Constitution. As soon as the anti-imperialist freedom movement came under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership and penetrated into the rural masses, formation of linguistic States became one of the key slogans of freedom fighters. This was a clear indication of the fact that the "unity of India" for which the freedom movement was fighting cannot be divorced from the "diversity of the various linguistic cultural groups" that inhabit it. Neither the military power wielded by the emperors of ancient India nor the colonial engine of oppression perfected by the British which are supposed to have "united India" can be used in a free and democratic India. Indian unity today can be maintained only if the leaders of the united India allow full freedom of development to every linguistic-cultural group, reserving for themselves only such minimum powers as are absolutely necessary in the common interest of the entire people. This is the essence of federal idea.

24. However, discussion on this question in pre-independent years assumed a distorted form, since it was mixed up with the problem of Hindu-Muslim relations. The spokesmen of the two major religious communities became the champions of the unitary and federal structures. It was in the course of an attempted agreement between the two communities (the Lucknow Pact of 1916, the All Party Conference in the years preceding the 1935 Constitution and in the discussions before the 1947 Transfer of Power) that the leaders of National Congress accepted the federal idea. They therefore had serious reservation on it, considering their acceptance of the federal idea as nothing more than a compromise. They therefore took advantage of the first available opportunity—the partition of India which removed the Muslim League from the scene—to bring back as big a part of the unitary concept as they could. This was how, in framing the Constitution, they subscribed to the federal principle in words but made the federal Centre so powerful that the State structure as a whole is hardly distinguishable from a unitary one.

25. Light on this is thrown by the manner in which the problem of Kashmir has been dealt with by the Central leaders. In the days of the most acute conflict on the Kashmir issue—in the immediate post-independence years—it was agreed that Kashmir would accede to the Indian Union only in relation to Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications.

In relation to every other subject, the State of Jammu and Kashmir was recognised as fully sovereign. Gradually, however, the autonomy of the State was subjected to increasing encroachments leading ultimately to the present situations where this State is almost as much part of India as any other State. This, however, has resulted in the most acute and continuing conflict between the Centre and the State. The series of arrests and releases to which the former Prime Minister of the State, Sheikh Abdulla has been subjected and the deadlock that has now been reached after his latest release from prison, indicate the depth and seriousness of the crisis of Centre-State relations in so far as it affects this State.

26. This one example, together with the developing situation in Nagaland, Mizoland and the Assam Hills shows that the unity of India including these areas can not be preserved except on the basis of the voluntary consent of the people concerned. The use of the over-riding powers vested in the Centre will further antagonise the people of these areas from the Centre. If this continues for some time, it will be impossible to resist their demand for the complete separation from India.

27. Hindi-non-Hindi controversy and the general demand of all the States for greater powers and greater financial resources have, of course, not reached such an advanced stage of political crisis. There are, however, sufficient indications to show that they too will develop along these lines if they are not dealt with in a statesmanlike manner and with vision. The essential prerequisite for such a statesmanlike approach is the recognition that India is a country inhabited by peoples with different linguistic-cultural affinities. Any effort at forging the 'unity' of the country without taking account the "diversity" of its peoples will lead to disintegration and chaos. It is this fact that is underlined by the anti-Hindi explosion of 1965—an explosion which virtually nullified Art 340 of the Constitution on the Official Language. Even after the 15 years laid down under Sec 2 of that Article, English continues to be used for all the official purposes of the Union and it will continue indefinitely. Centre-State conflicts on economic and financial issues too have led to agitations and movements drawing hundreds of thousands of people, sometimes raging the people of one State against that of another, and sometimes rallying them against the Centre. It is a question of time for all these problems to come up in as acute a form as those of Kashmir, Nagaland etc.—unless, of course, the problem is tackled with sufficient forethought and insight into the real forces working behind these movements.

28. From this angle too, it is clear, the State structure built as per the provisions of the Constitution requires thorough overhauling. It is not proposed here to spell out in detail how this overhauling is to be done. What is possible and necessary is only to emphasise that the concept of a Federal State with "a strong Centre" having over-riding powers on the autonomy of the States has been tried and found wanting. Continuance of such a structure is bound to break the Constitution under the heavy load of tensions which it has heaped on it.

29. This discussion may now be summed up by restating the attitude of our Party to the Republican Constitution of India.

(a) We look upon the framing of the Constitution as a historical landmark in the sense that it has given the working people and their political representatives new opportunities for organising themselves and perfecting their weapons of struggle for a new socialist system. The victories gained by them by way of not only reducing the Congress strength in the country as a whole, but also of forming non-Congress Governments on occasions in a few States are a guarantee that the defence of the Parliamentary system is in the interests of the working people.

(b) It would, however, be a dangerous illusion to think that this system is so perfect that it can be used in order to transform the present socio-economic system of exploitation into a socialistic system through the mere use of constitutional means. The danger of this system being subverted by the vested interests is very real. Even if that danger is averted and the political representatives of the working people do get a majority in the Central Parliament, the Constitution as has been framed and is being worked now, should be thoroughly overhauled if it is to be used for bringing about these social transformations.

(c) An equally or more serious danger to the system emanates from the totally incorrect handling of the problems of Centre-State relations which have already led to serious crises in some parts of the country and which may well expand themselves into other parts. The struggle against these incorrect policies of the ruling Party and for national integration on the basis of the well-known slogan "unity in diversity" is therefore an inseparable part of the struggle for the preservation of the parliamentary democratic system.

(d) The threat to the parliamentary system emanating from the reactionaries can be fought back if and so long as the system continues and the political representatives of the working people use it skilfully. Adult suffrage, declaration of Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of state policy, legislative forums and the Judiciary—all these can, to a limited extent be used in order to mobilise increasing sections of the people, against the reactionary attempts at the subversion of the parliamentary system.

It is on the basis of such an approach to the Constitution that our party has placed before the people a programme of overhauling the State structure from top to bottom. That programme is as follows:

(1) The sovereignty of the people. The supreme power in the State must be vested entirely in the people's representatives who will be elected by the people on the basis of proportional representation and be subject to recall at any time upon a demand by the majority of the electorate.

(2) Universal, equal and direct suffrage for all male and female citizens of India who have attained the age of 18 years in all elections to Parliament, State legislatures and to local Government bodies. Secret ballot, the right of any voter to be elected to any representative institution.

(3) Widest autonomy for the various States comprising the Indian federation.

(4) Completion of the process of reorganisation of States on linguistic basis. All States shall have equal powers.

(5) There shall be no Governors for the States appointed from above. Nor shall there be the so-called Upper Houses. At the Centre there shall be two Houses, the House of the People and the House of States. Both shall have equal powers and equal number of members. The House of States shall have also equal representation from all the States in the Indian Union. The President shall act in accordance with decisions of both the Houses and shall have no other powers.

(6) The tribal areas or the areas where population is specific in composition and is distinguished by specific social and cultural conditions will have regional autonomy with regional government within the State concerned and shall receive full assistance for their development, or full autonomy.

(7) In the field of local administration, a wide network of local bodies from the village upward, directly elected by the people, and invested with real powers and responsibility. Adequate finances shall be ensured to the local bodies.

(8) All administrative services shall be under the direct control of the respective States or local authorities.

(9) Introduction of democratic changes in the administration of justice. The Judiciary will be completely independent of the executive. The appointment of Judges will be subject to approval by Parliament, legislatures or appropriate people's organs at different levels;

—Right of all persons to sue any official before a court of law;

—Free legal aid and advice will be provided for the needy in order to make legal redress easily available for all.

(10) The people's democratic Government will infuse the members of the armed forces with the spirit of patriotism and democracy. It will ensure them good living standards and conditions of services, maximum possible opportunities for cultural life, as well as the education and well-being of their children.

(11) The introduction of graded tax in industry, agriculture and trade, and maximum relief in taxation for workers, peasants and artisans. Profits shall be controlled.

(12) All our institutions must be infused with the spirit of democracy, of respect for and reliance on the people as well as confidence in their determination to build a democratic society free from bureaucracy and injustice.

The people's democratic Government will, therefore, extend democratic forms of initiative and control over every aspect of national life. A key role in this will be played by the trade unions, peasant and agricultural labour associations and other organisations of the working people. The Government will take steps to make the legislative and executive machinery of the country continuously responsive to the democratic wishes of the people

and will ensure that masses and their organisations are drawn into active participation in the administration and work of the State. Bureaucratisation shall be eliminated. Wide disparities in salaries and incomes are to be abolished.

(13) Inviolability of person and domicile; no detention without trial, unhampered freedom of conscience, religious belief and worship, speech, press, assembly, strike and combination, freedom of movement and occupation.

(14) Equal rights for all citizens irrespective of religion, caste, sex, race or nationality, equal pay for equal work irrespective of sex.

(15) Removal of social disabilities from which women suffer, equal rights with men in such matters as inheritance of property, enforcement of marriage and divorce laws, admission to professions and services.

(16) Abolition of social oppression of one caste by another, untouchability to be punished by law. Special facilities for the scheduled castes, tribes and other backward communities shall be provided in the matter of Services and other social and educational amenities.

(17) Separation of the State from all religious institutions, the secular character of the State shall be guaranteed. Interference by religious institutions in the affairs of the State and the political life of the country shall be prohibited;

—Religious minorities shall be given protection against discrimination.

(18) Right of people to receive instructions in their mother-tongue in educational institutions; the use of the national language of the particular State as the language of administration in all its public and State institutions, as well as its use as the medium of education in the State up to the highest standard; provision for the use of the language of a minority or region where necessary in addition to the language of the State. Use of Hindi as an all-India language will not be obligatory but will be encouraged as a means of intercourse between the people of different States. Adhere to the principle of replacing English by the regional languages at the State level and Hindi at the Centre as administrative language. Transition from English to Hindi at the Centre should be simultaneous with the same from English to the regional languages in the State; the preparation for this transition which is being made by the Centre with regard to Hindi should also be made with all necessary Central assistance in States in regard to regional languages. At the same time, for the transition period, the duration of which should be decided with the consent of the non-Hindi-speaking regions, English should be given the status of an associate administrative language. Equality of all national languages in Parliament and Central administration will be recognised. Members of Parliament will have the right to speak in any national language and simultaneous translation will be provided in all national languages. All acts, Government orders and resolutions will be made available in all

national languages, Urdu language and its script will be protected.

—Free and compulsory education up to the secondary stage.

(19) Establishment of a wide network of health, medical and maternity services, free of cost, as well as rest homes and recreation centres for the people.

(20) The people's democratic State and Government will undertake the important task of unleashing the creative talents of the people for creating and extending the new progressive people's culture which is anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and democratic in character. Necessary measures to foster, encourage and develop such literature, art and culture as will—

—help each nationality including the tribal people to develop their own distinctive way and in unison with the common aspirations of the democratic masses of the country as a whole;

—help the democratic masses in their struggle to improve their living conditions and enrich their life;

—help the people to get rid of caste and communal hatred and prejudices and ideas of subservience or superstitions;

—help all people to develop feelings of brotherhood with the peace-loving peoples of all countries and discourage ideas of racial and national hatred.

(21) The people's democratic Government will take measures to consolidate the unity of India by fostering and promoting mutual cooperation between the constituent States and between the peoples of different States in the economic, political and cultural spheres. It will pay special attention and financial and other assistance to economically backward and weaker States, regions and areas with a view to helping them rapidly overcome their backwardness.

(Concluded)

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Private Sector Discloses Little

D. B. R. CHAUDHURI

OUT of 7,271 limited liability companies in India, 1,150 list their shares on one or another of the stock exchanges. When these listed companies solicit capital through stock issues, their shares are traded on these exchanges. The adequacy of the data they disclose is obviously a factor in determining the success of the issue. Consequently, whether capital can be induced to finance India's continuing development depends to a significant extent on the way our listed companies reveal their financial data. Whatever investors look for in investing their funds, none omits an analysis of financial information or the lack thereof.

Annual reports of the companies is the principal source of the scant information available here and this corporate disclosure in annual reports is now regulated by the Companies Act of 1956 (as amended to date) and the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act of the same year. The disclosure requirements under the first statute include:

(1) A true and fair presentation of the state of affairs of the company should be in the balance sheet. Also a true and fair profit-and-loss statement of the company for the financial year should be represented.

(2) Every shareholder, debenture-holder and every trustee for debenture-holders is entitled to copies of the balance sheet, profit-and-loss statement and auditor's report at least 21 days prior to the General Meeting. Even someone from whom the company has accepted a sum of money by way of deposit is entitled to receive a copy of the balance-sheet and profit-and-loss

statement on payment of a fee of one rupee.

(3) Three copies of the balance sheet, profit-and-loss statement and auditor's report must be filed with the Registrar of Companies at the same time as the copy of annual return.

The Securities Contracts (Regulations) Act of 1956 is the first all-India legislation to control transactions in securities, and to regulate stock-exchange practices. Administration of the Act has been entrusted to a Directorate of Stock Exchanges set up in 1959. One of the functions of the directorate is to ensure that companies which trade on the stock exchanges comply with listing requirements. The principal obligations placed on the company by the listing agreement form are:

(a) immediately following the Board meeting, inform the stock exchange about recommended dividend action and of any resolution relating to the issue of share rights or bonus shares;

(b) file with the stock exchange, 6 copies of its annual report, proceedings of its annual general meetings and a schedule showing distribution of stocks and the names of 10 largest stockholders;

(c) publish in a form approved by the Stock exchange such periodical interim statements of its operating results as it shall from time to time agree upon with the exchange;

(d) promptly notify the exchange of any proposed change in the general character or nature of business, any change in the company's directorate by death, resignation, removal or otherwise, any change of mana-

ging director, managing agents or secretaries and treasurers, and any change of auditors appointed to audit the books and accounts of the company.

While these requirements aim at obtaining more adequate disclosure of corporate data, they in fact realize the reverse by setting low standards which Indian companies compete to approximate and never exceed. Vagueness is a common complaint. The laws allow the companies excessive latitude in valuing inventory and computing depreciation and depletion. Procedures for computing net profit are not standard. Provision for taxes is allowed to appear in the balance sheet's surplus reserve account without appearing in the profits-and-loss statement.

Looseness in terminology permits companies to show their deferred expenses in the balance sheet without indicating them in the profit-and-loss statement. Neither the number of stockholders nor of employees is disclosed. The acts do not require financial statement for each subsidiary and include them individually in the annual report of the parent company. Some companies switch over from tax-free dividends to taxable dividends, making comparison difficult. The law requires annual reports to state items of income and expense clearly and under the most "convenient headings", and to include, by separate entry if necessary, all the information prescribed by law. Since convenience is a discretionary concept, items are in effect arranged in various ways by different companies, which render them almost useless for comparison.

Similarly, some companies do not distinguish between current and fixed assets and because of the looseness of requirements, patents and goodwill are classified by some companies as fixed assets.

Weak laws and requirements stem in good part from Indian management's opposition to disclosure. In most cases, the listed companies seem to be unwilling to give information about their affairs even to the stock exchange. These companies often request the exchange—and what is more the exchange agrees—to keep secret such information as the names of the ten largest shareholders and the distribution of shareholding.

Basic Cause

This shyness about divulging important data can be explained by control over trade and industry by few families and the character of our managers. These families do not like to expose themselves to the scrutiny of the Central Revenue authorities. The thinking of Indian Managers is that what goes on in the corporation is no one's business but theirs. And this attitude covers shareholders as well as outsiders; few encourage the stockholders to dig in and deepen their understanding of the company. But the basic cause, quite simply, is that our managers dislike public exposure.

Those foreign-managed enterprises in India that seek to inform the public and external investors as fully as possible appear to please the investors' palate. But the financial reports of Indian-owned and Indian-managed companies reveal neither the company's profitability nor the investment risk involved. So Indians tend to avoid share purchase in domestic firms, regarding the stock market as a gambling house. This is reflected in figures on shareholders; there are less than 500,000 stockholders in India, or only .0001 percent of the population while in Japan 4.2 percent of the citizens hold equities. Our people prefer hoarding or unorganised money market (to finance consumer dis-saving) as outlets for surplus

funds. Foreign investors are also sharing same distrust in Indian companies, due to crippling dearth of reliable and up-to-date corporate data.

Recent Comparisons

A recent American research-study (uninfluenced by Dr Hazari) in the Indian Private Corporate Sector provides a comparison of annual reports of 45 listed Indian Companies with a hundred randomly-selected US reports. The comparison covers a dozen points:

(1) The statement of cash-flow or source and use of funds, which is considered very useful for making intelligent investment decisions, is prepared by only six-percent of the listed companies in India as compared with 85 percent in the USA. Of course, the disclosure of such information in the USA is also a recent development. In the sample, out of the three Indian companies which prepared such statements, two are foreign-managed and the third one is Tata Steel (Tisco).

(2) A summary of important financial data for ten years or since the company's inception is disclosed by 11 percent of the Indian listed companies, as compared with 74 percent in the USA. Such horizontal comparison of financial data is very useful in discerning trends.

(3) The method of inventory valuation, such as Lifo, Fifo and the like is not disclosed by any company in India; 70 percent of the listed companies in the USA made this information available.

(4) Some description of the type of capital expenditure planned is given by 20 percent of the listed companies in India compared with 56 percent in the United States.

(5) Research and development expenses for the current year—important in evaluating the growth of a firm—are disclosed by only four percent of listed Indian companies as compared with 29 percent in the USA.

(6) Information on sales breakdown by customer or industry is not given by any Indian company, while it is made available by 15 percent of the US companies.

(7) Information on sales break-

down by major product lines is shown by 13 percent of the Indian firms as compared with 26 percent in the USA.

(8) Information on labour contracts and labour relations is disclosed by 20 percent of the listed companies in India; 62 percent do so in the USA.

(9) Only 24 percent of the Indian firms discussed new products development in the annual reports; the comparative figure for USA firms is 89 percent.

(10) The number of employees and stockholders is given by 13 percent and 24 percent of the companies in India respectively; while in the USA 76 percent of the companies disclosed this information.

(11) Only 15 percent of the Indian firms gave the names of their top management personnel; every US Company provided these.

(12) Hardly any company in India disclosed earnings per share, current ratio, and the like, for the current year. Most of the companies also failed to disclose stock options granted to management, pension and retirement plans, method of depreciation, etc. Such information is usually made available by American corporations.

Sketchy Financial Data

Not only financial data is sketchy in Indian annual reports, it is also badly presented from an editorial viewpoint. This is illustrated by five points:

(1) A statement giving corporate highlights of the year is normally quite useful to the investor. Only 14 out of the 45 listed Indian companies (31.1 percent) included it.

(2) Percentage comparisons are also useful in explaining the significance of terms in financial statements. Out of the 45 companies, only 15 used the percentage method to show useful data in annual reports.

(3) Statistical graphs and charts can be an effective way to dramatize major financial statistics if accompanied by related texts and figures. Out of the 45, only 18 provided such charts and graphs.

(4) There are several matters which cannot be presented in the main body of financial statements

but as footnotes may be presented. Only five Indian companies presented notes to financial statements in a systematic manner.

(5) The balance sheet should be presented briefly and uniformly. Out of 45 companies; 39 prepared balance sheets in the traditional T-form while the rest of them used the modern reporting form. In addition, 10 companies presented balance-sheets running to four or more pages. Such

lengthy expositions are difficult for many investors to understand.

The problem remains that management believes in presenting as little data in as indigestible a form as possible and the Government is yet to effectively combat this attitude.

The solution is two-pronged; (1) educate management to understand that secrecy does not pay; that disclosure—even if the process uncovers weaknesses—is vital

to the survival and health of the national economy; and (2) enact more stringent and precise laws and proceed to the establishment of a regulatory agency, such as on the lines of US Securities and Exchange Commission to enforce them.

Unless India is prepared to take these measures soon, she risks being left far behind in the race to convert her people from largely unproductive habits of savings.

Defections in Legislatures

K. C. S.

“THE political situation today is as crazy as modern art,” says James Reston. In our country this craziness is reflected largely in defections, their effects and motivations. Defection on the part of a few may result in the toppling of a Government, so that the proposition in physics that energy is proportional to mass is falsified.

The outward expression of defection is floor-crossing; a few steps taken across the floor by a few who are bored with an unromantic party, or troubled with a bad conscience, or have acquired a zest for adventure or for more affluent living, may have momentous consequences. It seldom gives rise to the feeling “that’s a good riddance” or “this is the moment of truth”; bitterness in one party is balanced by jollification in another.

It is, however, regarded generally as a nuisance, for what a party gains in one day it may lose in a subsequent day; and proposals are sometimes made as to how this practice can be curbed. The Central Government appointed a Committee on Defection, which has been considering the various suggestions received by it. One suggestion was that

a defector should be prevented from holding any office or position of profit for one year. This proposal was made by the present writer in an article which appeared in the press some time ago. It was further suggested that this ban should be removed if the defector resigned from the legislature and sought re-election. There were also suggestions for limitation of the size of the Council of Ministers which might reduce the profitability of defection. The Swatantra Party’s view appears to be that very little could be done by law and that any possible remedy should be provided by building up suitable conventions.

The Motivations

The motivations of defection are not, of course, always the same. A member of a party may be piqued by the party’s indifference to his claim to office, or he may be disgusted with the inner working of the party, or with the line taken by it on an important matter, or he may be lured by brighter prospects in another party; or he may be aware that his party is gradually becoming a sinking ship and feels that it would be safer if he quits it in time. Though most defec-

tions appear to spring from no higher motive than greed and selfish ambition, some may be rooted in conscientious objection to some feature or element of his party’s policies; and it would, in any given case, be difficult to say what particular motive or thinking lay behind it.

But it can be stated that defections, as a general rule, not only are inspired by unprincipled motives but often result in serious consequences, and that, therefore, it is necessary to put a curb on the practice, although such curb may operate harshly on the conscientious defector. One who defects for conscientious objections should not feel that any rule making him ineligible for a post of profit would adversely affect his future career. Though such a member may have been elected on the basis of the fundamentals of a certain party’s political creed or policy, once he is elected he becomes a member of the legislature for legislation for the whole State or the country, as the case may be, and he cannot be called upon to violate his own conscience in matters affecting the larger interests of his State or the country.

The proposal to disqualify a

defector for any position of profit for a year appears to be a good one, so far as it goes. But, there are ways of rewarding a defector other than the gift of a profitable office. A good deterrent would be a rule which would make a defector ineligible for a ticket in the two parties affected if a mid-term election be held. Such a procedure is reported to have been adopted recently in Haryana, but it did not prevent some persons from standing as a rival party's candidates or as Independents. Still such a rule, if enforced by both the parties, would have a deterrent value. The proposal cannot, however, be put on any legal basis, but should be a matter of convention brought about by the parties in the legislature; of course, it may be given effect to unilaterally by a single party.

Definition of Defection

One more proposal is that a defector should automatically lose his seat in the legislature, for which he may stand for election again. This would be very effective if it could be incorporated in a legal rule.

Another proposal is that a Chief Minister should be given the power to dissolve the Assembly and ask for a mid-term poll if his party is likely to lose its majority as the result of significant defections. This would be an undemocratic provision, as one could not say that the defections were caused by unprincipled motivation, and no law should be enacted merely to prop up a falling regime.

We may now consider whether any of the provisions approved above can be embodied in a legal provision. First, what should be the definition of defection? Defection is defined in the Twentieth Century Chambers' Dictionary as "a failure, a falling away from duty; revolt". The first two meanings cannot be adopted, and "revolt" is too wide: perhaps "leaving a body composed of the members of a political party elected to a legislature" would be an improvement; the expression "defector" being construed accordingly. But the expression "party" or

"political party" is not a term of art in our Constitution, though it is a clearly understood expression and represents an actuality. Perhaps it may be described as "a group of persons recognised as a party by the Election Commissioner for the purposes of an election".

Coming, now, to the proposal that a defector should be prevented from holding any office or position of profit for one year, a Minister is not, I believe technically to be regarded as a holder of an office of profit. It may, however, be enacted that a defector shall not be eligible for any post of a Minister or any other post in the gift of a political party, or any member thereof, for the period of one year from the date of his defection. Here the words "of profit" have been omitted; this would avoid any controversy as to the exact implication of those words, and the expression used will have a wider and more useful denotation. It seems to me that such a rule could be lawfully enacted. The ban could be lifted if the defector resigned from the legislature and sought re-election.

Salutary Rule

Of course, a would-be defector may be content with the consideration he has already received from his would-be adoptive party, and may reconcile himself to the rule in question; and such a contingency cannot be prevented. In any case the original party should consider itself lucky to have got rid of such a member, and he may also, after having received his reward in advance, show little interest in the affairs of his new party. There can be little doubt that in spite of such contingencies, the proposed rule would be salutary and, on the whole, a good deterrent.

Limitation of the size of the Council of Ministers, both at the Centre as well as in the States, also appears to me to be legally feasible. Such a rule has, I believe, been adopted in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. It should specify the maximum number of Ministers for each State and the Centre,

which would be varying numbers for different States.

As to the proposal that a defector should automatically lose his seat in the legislature, that appears to me to be too drastic a remedy and would be against the constitutional right of free association. Such a person has been elected to the legislature, not to any party seat. The other two proposed remedies considered above would not deprive him of his position as a member of the legislature.

Difficult to Define

I have not mentioned one more proposal, namely, that on a defector leaving his party his constituency should have the right of "recall"; that is, should have the power to revoke his election. Such a provision exists in the constitutions of certain Communist States, but such power is not known to have ever been exercised. It may be difficult to define what exactly would be the constituency of such a person: whether the body of those who actually voted for him or the whole body of voters in the electoral area concerned. In any case, it would be difficult for the body in question to meet together and voice their demand. It would be best, in my opinion, not to seek a remedy of this nature.

One further question remains: can a member of a legislature, elected as an Independent, be guilty of defection? He may choose for a time to support a particular party, but so long as he does not actually join a party his political label would be that of an Independent; and if he leaves the support of a particular party and switches it on to another party, he cannot, in my opinion, be termed a defector.

The remedies recommended here may require amendments to the Constitution, and as they involve the interests of all parties, it may not be difficult to get the amount of support necessary for this purpose in Parliament. The question whether the solution in question or any of these can be converted into law by other means, that is, without amending the Constitution, ought in the first instance to be examined.

Agricultural Prosperity in Punjab

Myth and Reality

PRITAM SINGH

PUNJAB is the most prosperous State in India. In 1964-65 and 1965-66 per capita income of the Indian Union at current prices was Rs 427 and Rs 430 respectively whereas per capita income of Punjab for the same period was Rs 619 and Rs 599 respectively. Individually also no other State even comes near Punjab in its per capita income. It is so far the highest in India.

The economy of the State is predominantly agricultural. In 1965-66 percentage of workers engaged in agriculture to total workers in Punjab was 54.09. Net out-put at factor cost at current prices was as follows in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors.

TABLE 1

Particulars	1964-65 Percentage	1965-66 Percentage
Primary Sector	56.2	48.8
Secondary Sector	15.9	20.3
Tertiary Sector	27.9	30.9

Chronic food shortage and especially failure of agricultural output during the past two successive years resulted in shift in terms of trade favourable to the agricultural sector in the country. Agricultural Prices Commission, in its report on Price Policy for Kharif Cereals for 1967-68 observed, "An examination of the relevant data suggests that the terms

of trade between cereals and manufactures have shifted in favour of the former by nearly 33 percent since 1960-61. If the open market prices of cereals were considered, the shift in relative prices in favour of cereals would be much larger."

This creates an impression that people in the agricultural sector have grown richer as compared to other sectors. Per capita income and other statistical averages cannot tell the whole story. A thorough examination is required to sift facts from fiction.

In order to gauge the impact of the economic changes on the economic life of the cultivators, a survey was conducted in the following 15 villages of Tehsil Kharar, District Rupar:

(1) Peer Sohana; (2) Simbal Majra; (3) Rurki Pukhta; (4) Bhago Majra; (5) Dau Majra; (6) Rudiala; (7) Bhukhri; (8) Allahpur; (9) Bhajauli; (10) Ghattaur; (11) Sahauran; (12) Lakhnaur; (13) Shahpur; (14) Naggal; (15) Nanheri.

The above villages are contiguous and form a compact block and are situated within a radius of 15 miles from Chandigarh. The soil is superior loam-mixture of sand and clay. The rainfall is fairly good because the block is at the foot of Shivalik Hills. About 91 percent of the cultivated area is Barani. All the villages are well served by road. No village is more than two to three miles away from the metalled roads. The block is served by the markets of Kharar and Kurali. The cultivators do not have to travel more than four to five miles to take their produce to

these mandis or for purchasing their other requirements. Taking all these factors into consideration and especially the proximity of the block to a very important and prosperous urban centre like Chandigarh, its study yields a fairly representative picture. No sampling technique was adopted since the whole area was taken for the purposes of the present study.

The data was collected from the Lal Kitabs (Village papers) maintained by the Patwaris of all the fifteen villages. An intensive touring of the block was made and the information regarding general development was collected by observation, by depth interviews of the cultivators, revenue officials, the development workers, and others. The information was also collected through a questionnaire.

At the time of settlement very detailed information regarding the economic conditions of the cultivators is prepared. Last settlement in this area was made in 1917-18. Therefore for the purposes of comparative study, the year 1917-18 has been selected and the pertinent data has been taken from the Settlement Report, 1917-18.

There is acute land hunger in Punjab. For the purpose of acquiring a piece of land endless litigation goes on from generation to generation and from court to court. In this process the cultivators are ruined economically, families are estranged, heads are broken, limbs are lost and even murders take place. A cultivator who mortgages his land or sells any portion, falls in the estimation of

The author is the Deputy Economic and Statistical Adviser, Food and Supplies Department, Punjab

his fellow cultivators and loses his social status. Sometimes it becomes difficult for him even to marry his children. Therefore a cultivator moves heaven and earth to avoid mortgaging his land or to avoid its sale. Only in extreme circumstances a sale or a mortgage takes place. A piece of land is still a readily accepted and a reluctantly offered security for obtaining a loan. Table 2 gives the comparative position regarding mortgages with possession in the block.

It would be observed that at the time of last settlement, the land under mortgage with possession was 618 acres but now it is 440 acres. Similarly consideration money per acre was Rs 441, whereas now it is Rs 2,528. No doubt there is 22.8 percent decrease in the mortgaged area and about five times increase in the consideration money, but it cannot be taken as an index of farmers' prosperity. As the value of land has risen, smaller area is required to be mortgaged to meet the requirements. But the consideration money has risen only five times whereas the general price level has risen about twenty times. In 1917, incidence per land owner was Rs 159.65 but now it is Rs 334.76 and similarly incidence per cultivated acre was Rs 55.84 at the time of Settlement but now it is Rs 204.46.

The average size of holding in the area is very small and uneconomic. The total number of owners at the time of settlement was 1,707 owning 5,648 acres of land. As compared to this at present there are 3,300 land owners holding an area of 5,682 acres. The cultivated area at the time of last settlement was 4,880 and now it is 5,403. The average cultivated area per holding at the time of last settlement was 2.06 whereas now it is 1.6. Assuming a holding of less than 10 acres and above as large sized, it was observed that only small land holders mortgaged their land. The traditional blood sucking shaukar has disappeared. The area was taken on mortgage by the big land owners.

The position in Punjab as a whole is not in any way different. Statistician, Department of Agri-

TABLE 2

	<i>At the time of last settlement in 1917.</i>	<i>Average of five years from 1961-62 to 1965-66.</i>
Total area mortgaged	618 acres	440
Cultivated area	610 acres	437
Consideration money	Rs 2,72,538	Rs 11,04,736
Average consideration money per acre (cultivated area)	Rs 441	Rs 2,528
Total number of land owners in the block	1,707	3,300
Incidence per land owner	Rs 159.65	Rs 334.76
Total cultivated area held by land owners in the block	4,880 acres	5,403 acres
Incidence per cultivated acre owned by land owners	Rs 55.84	Rs 204.46

culture, Punjab, conducted a survey during Rabi season of 1964-65 to collect information regarding size and distribution of agricultural holdings. Percentage of area mortgaged was found as follows: Amritsar 5.8; Gurdaspur 2.7; Jullundur 1.5; Ferozepur 4.3; Ludhiana 3.3; Hoshiarpur 1.7; Rupar 3.3; Kapurthala 1.7; Patiala 2.1; Bhatinda 4.9; Sangrur 3.9;

Another interesting fact noticed is that the sale of land has increased as would be evident from Table 3.

As the time of last settlement, only three acres were sold whereas the average for five years from 1961-62 to 1965-66 is 83 acres. The transfer of land under cultivation through sale has increased about 28 times since the last Settlement. The average price per cultivated acre has increased from Rs 697 to Rs 2,822 during 1961-62 to 1965-66. Again this appreciation in the value of land cannot serve as an indicator of farmers' prosperity. In this case also the small cultivator sold his land which was purchased by medium and big land owners. But this situation is not peculiar to this block only. The trend of transfer of land from small land holders to big land holders prevails throughout the State as has been revealed by the Rural Credit Follow-up Survey (General Review Reports for 1956-57, pp 190 and 193), 1957-58 (p 83) conducted by the Reserve Bank. In this respect it would be interesting to examine

Tables 4, 5 and 6.

Data given in table 4 and 5 shows that concentration of land is taking place in the hands of the big (large) landowners. We also get a conclusive proof of this fact when we compare the percentage of area under different sizes of owners' holdings as it obtained in 1953-54 with 1964-65.

It is clear that percentage of area owned in 1964-65 decreased for the owners' holding, not exceeding 10 acres and it increased for all holdings up to 40 acres. It is true that percentage of area for 40 and above acres has also decreased in 1964-65, but it is due to the ceiling of 30 standard acres placed on land holdings by law. However, it has been observed that most of the landlords owning land above 30 standard acres have been able to prevent the distribution of surplus area to the landless and small tenants by one way or the other and bulk of the land does, not only, continue to be held by medium and big land owners but it is also shifting from the hands of small land owners to those of medium and big land owners. There is no doubt that above mentioned statistics relate to the pre-reorganized Punjab, but the situation in the post-reorganized Punjab cannot be very different from this. This trend continues as in the past.

Due to recent land reforms and ceiling of 30 standard acres on land holding, the surplus

TABLE 3

<i>Details</i>	<i>At the time of settlement (acres)</i>	<i>Average of five years from 1961-62 to 1965-66 (acres)</i>
Total area sold	3	83
Cultivated area	3	82
Price	Rs 2,091	Rs 2,31,441
Average price per cultivated acre	Rs 697	Rs 2,822

area is supposed to have been distributed amongst the small land owners thus increasing the proportion of land held by them. But strangely enough, it has not happened and in spite of much advertised land reforms the bulk of land continues to be held by big land owners. Statistics, Department of Agriculture Punjab, on the basis of data collected in Rabi, 1964-65 survey, has observed as follows regarding the distribution of operational holdings and of area in pre-reorganized Punjab.

— "It is seen that 25.2 percent of the holdings operating less than five acres have command over only 5.3 percent of the area, and 6.2 percent of the holdings above 30 acres' size constitute as much as 23.5 per cent of the area. Assuming a holding of less than 10 acres as small sized, 10 to 20 acres as medium sized and 20 acres and above as large sized, 52.0 percent, 30.6 percent and 17.4 percent holdings of these three categories—cultivate 20.8 percent, 34.0 percent and 45.2 percent of the area respectively. Thus it shows that a relatively smaller proportion of cultivators have a higher proportion of the area."

Out of a total cultivated area of 1,216 acres given on rent, 642 acres were given on Batai rent (share basis) and 574 acres on 'Chakota' (cash rent) giving a percentage of 10.2 percent and 9.1 percent respectively. Though according to law only one-third

can be claimed as Batai rent, it was found that in all the cases the landlords took half as Batai rent. This cannot be attributed to the ignorance of the landlords or the tenants. Both are aware of the provisions of law in this regard but the landlords continue to extract more and the tenants continue to pay more, because of scarcity of land. Incidentally, the benefit of favourable terms of trade, have been reaped by the big land owners. The small land owner is still a subsistence farmer. He has little surplus to sell in the market. Rising prices do not help him much because he has to buy his other requirements also at higher rates. But the falling prices also ruin him because generally the agricultural prices decline at a faster rate.

The position in the State as a whole is not different than that prevailing in this block. A close analysis of Table 7 presents a very revealing picture.

It is noticed that 29.4 percent of the cultivators take land on share basis and the area operated under this system is 12.8 percent of the total area. It is also seen that in respect of 7.8 percent of the area taken on share basis, the tenants pay one-third of the total produce to the land owners, in the case of 90.7 percent of the area the share basis of the produce is 50:50 and in 1.5 percent of the area the land owners get 2/5th of the total produce.

It is generally the small land-owners who take land on rent. When on 90.7 percent of such area a cultivator has to part with one half of the produce, then the economic gains reaped by him in such a situation can be easily imagined.

The transfer of land (through mortgage and sale) took place mostly during 1962-63, 1963-64 and 1964-65. During these years the rains failed.

At the time of the last settlement there were only two wells. Now the number of wells has gone up to 49 and that of tubewells and pumping sets to nine. The area irrigated by wells was only two acres at the time of last settlement but now it is 594 acres. There is an increase of 29.600 percent in the 'Chahi' area, yet it forms only three percent of the total area. This shows that there is only an insignificant increase in the 'Chahi' area. The irrigation facilities have not developed to the extent under which the agriculture would become independent of the monsoons and would no longer remain a gamble on the rains.

In Punjab even in 1966-67 only 58 percent of the net area was under irrigation. This shows that agriculture has not become free from the influence of vagaries of nature. Average area irrigated per tubewell or pumping set is about 10 acres and by an ordinary well is about one acre. Installation of a five HP tubewell or a pumping set roughly costs about Rs 5,000. It would not be economical for a cultivator to install a tubewell if he owns less than 10 acres. Moreover only a rich farmer can spend Rs 5,000 for its installation. When rains fail, it is the small cultivator who suffers as he cannot afford a well or a tubewell. But the rich farmer

TABLE 4
Proportion of cultivators reporting purchase/sale of land (per cent)

District	Big cultivators			Large cultivators			Medium cultivators			Small cultivators		
	Purchase	Sale	Net	Purchase	Sale	Net	Purchase	Sale	Net	Purchase	Sale	
Ferozepur (1956-57)	8.3	4.1	+4.2	8.1	1.4	1.4	+6.7	1.5	0.7	+0.8	—	1.4
Jullundur (1957-58)	12	4	+8	7	5	+2	6	1	+5	—	—	

TABLE 5

Proportion of Expenditure on Purchase of Land to Total Capital
Expenditure on Agriculture per Family (per cent)

District	Big Cultivators	Large Cultivators	Medium Cultivators	Small Cultivators
Ferozepur (1956-57)	35	37	1	—
Jullundur (1957-58)	31	39	50	—

TABLE 6

Grades of holdings (in acres)	Percentage of area owned in 1953-54	Percentage of area owned in 1964-65
Not exceeding 10	36.15	22.3
10-20	20.98	29.5
20-30	12.09	22.0
30-40	7.50	10.0
40 and above	23.25	16.2

(Source—Figures relating to 1964-65 have been taken from the Report on the Size and Distribution of Agricultural Holdings in the Punjab 1964-65 and those relating to 1953-54 have been worked out from the relevant data given in the Statistical Abstract of Punjab 1961)

TABLE 7

Distribution and share basis of land taken on share

District	Percentage of cultivators taking land on share	Percentage of area taken on share	Percentage of area taken on share basis		
			1/3	1/2	2/5
Amritsar	30.1	15.5	—	100.0	—
Gurdaspur	23.5	10.7	—	100.0	—
Jullundur	47.9	19.4	0.2	99.8	—
Ferozepur	21.7	10.7	—	100.0	—
Ludhiana	46.3	17.1	—	90.7	9.3
Hoshiarpur	38.4	19.8	—	100.0	—
Rupar	33.7	13.3	—	100.0	—
Kapurthala	42.7	17.8	2.6	96.3	1.1
Patiala	31.2	13.6	39.6	54.7	5.7
Bhatinda	20.0	8.2	—	100.0	—
Sangrur	21.4	9.0	35.1	64.9	—
Punjab (post-reorganisation)	29.4	12.8	7.8	90.7	1.5

(Source: Report on the Size and Distribution of Agricultural Holdings in the Punjab 1964-65)

gains because due to failure of rains his agricultural production does not fall because of the irrigational facilities. The Agricultural Prices Commission may be correct in its opinion that due to failure of agricultural output and some other factors, the terms of trade between cereals and manufactures have shifted in favour of the former by nearly 33 percent since 1960-61, but due to this macro approach, we can-

not really know which section of the agriculturists has been benefited. Failure of agricultural production has led to the ruin of the small cultivator who forms bulk of our rural population.

Due to spread of education and easy means of communication and prosperity in certain income brackets, the agriculturist in Punjab is now wide-awake. Every bit of surplus that he can

afford, he spends on the improvement of his farming practices. But in spite of this, and the much trumpeted prosperity, some of the cultivators do not even possess the basic implements like a wooden plough, soil stirring plough, soil inverting plough, sohaga (earth leveller). A survey conducted by the Statistician, Department of Agriculture, Punjab during Kharif 1964-65 discloses a very disturbing picture of the economic conditions of farmers in Punjab. Table 8 gives the percentage of cultivators owning different implements and machinery during Kharif 1964-65.

An examination of the Table 8 discloses that 7.8 percent of the cultivators do not possess even a wooden plough of their own. 50.7 percent are without soil stirring plough and 43.7 percent are without soil inverting plough. 7.3 percent do not own a sohaga. These are the basic implements in the absence of which no cultivation worth the name can be undertaken. It must also be noticed that more costly and modern implements like tractor, spray pump, cotton drill and bar harrow are owned only by 1.1, 0.8, 3.3, 2.1 percent cultivators respectively. A good medium sized tractor costs between Rs 20,000 to Rs 30,000. It is obvious that only a very rich farmer can go in for mechanised cultivation and thus take benefit of double or triple cropping. No wonder that in the block under survey no farmer owned a tractor.

All the villages in the block under survey were served by cooperative credit societies. But the cooperative credit failed to check the mortgaging of land. The small farmers have a low borrowing capacity. When the occasion arises, they cannot meet their full requirements by borrowing from the cooperative societies. And in case they borrow, they cannot most often repay in time. It was also noticed that most of the borrowing was done at the time of births, deaths, sickness, marriage or some festive occasion and sometime for purchasing live-stock. The position obtaining in this block

is not in any way different from that prevailing in the rest of the State. In 1961-62 the primary agricultural credit societies in the State covered 96 percent of the villages and 87.8 percent of the cultivating households. Out of these 73.2 percent of the cultivating households reported indebtedness to various agencies. Borrowing members formed 66.3 percent of the cultivator households who reported borrowing. But the quantum of cooperative credit formed only 27.1 percent of the estimated borrowings of cultivators from all agencies. This shows that only a very small portion of the requirement was met by the cooperative credit. The position in the country at large is also not very different from that prevailing in Punjab.

In 1961-62 the cooperative credit met only 23.6 percent needs of the agricultural sector and in 1965-66 the borrowing of the cultivators from the cooperative still accounted for only 25.8 percent of the required credit needs leaving a large area as happy hunting ground for other unscrupulous agencies. The Reserve Bank of India Survey of cooperative credit has shown that the top 28 percent of the rural households have drawn more than 74 percent of the cooperative credit. This shows that cooperative credit has helped only the rich farmer and has failed in the area where help from it was most required.

Thus we come to the irresistible conclusion that though the terms of trade might have shifted in favour of the agricultural sector in recent years, yet the dynamics of rural economics has worked against the interest of small farmers which constitute bulk of the rural population. We have seen that shifting sands of time have resulted in slipping of the land holdings from the hands of the small cultivators and concentrating in the hands of the bigger landlords. The small farmer has been selling and mortgaging his land in spite of favourable terms of trade. He has been rack rented in spite of all the fanfare of land reforms. The cooperative credit has also not proved of any help to him. It

TABLE 8

S. No.	Name of the implement/machinery	Number of implements/machinery owned	Percentage of cultivators owning implements/machinery
1.	Plough (wooden)	Nil One Two or more	7.8 45.8 46.4
2.	Soil stirring plough	Nil One Two or more	50.7 35.5 13.8
3.	Soil inverting plough	Nil One Two or more	43.7 45.3 11.0
4.	Triphali	Nil One Two or more	88.1 10.3 1.6
5.	Bar-harrow	Nil One or more	97.9 2.1
6.	Sohaga	Nil One Two or more	7.3 88.9 3.8
7.	Cart	Nil One or more	50.3 49.7
8.	Cotton Drill	Nil One or more	96.7 3.3
9.	Fodder Cutter	Nil One or more	13.3 86.7
10.	Sugarcane Crusher	Nil One or on sharing basis	73.4 26.6
11.	Spray Pump	Nil One or on sharing basis	99.2 0.8
12.	Tractor	Nil One or on sharing basis	98.9 1.1

has only strengthened the grip of the rich farmer on rural economy.

The small cultivator still remains a poor, helpless, harassed and pathetic figure in our rural life. If this is his position in Punjab, which is the most prosperous agricultural state in India, the conditions in rest of the country can be well imagined.

If this situation continues, it can cut the very roots of our democratic way of life. The promise to establish socialistic pattern of society would remain a pious wish. Already pickets of strong vested interests have made their appearance in our rural life and have made their strength felt.

The problem is big and

baffling. We can ignore it only at our peril. The solutions are also well known. A number of alternatives are available. In order to help the poor muzhik, labour intensive methods of cultivation can be devised. But the whole trend of agricultural research is towards developing capital intensive techniques. He may be provided easy institutional credit but we have seen that only the kulak has taken the lion's share. Extension service may be made available at his door-step. But there is no efficient grass root administrative machinery. Even the Gram Sewak acts like a Bara Sahib in the village. The development workers generally remain outsiders. They have failed to

develop involvement in the developmental work.

Secondly, we can look towards cooperative farming, to find a way out of this impasse. Only economic holdings can lead to scientific cultivation. Cooperatives can prove a panacea for most ills of agricultural economy. But cooperative farming in spite of all the slogan-mongering, still remains a cry in the wilderness. Due to extreme individualism of our farmers, there is little hope of its success in the immediate future.

Thirdly, we may resort to collectivisation. But in this pro-

cess both the muzhik and the kulak would suffer dispossession.

Finally, looking strictly from the economic angle, it is a moot point whether kulakization of our agriculture is really so bad. It is the kulak who can invest capital in his land and practise capital intensive farming. It is only he who is capable of applying the latest techniques of farming. It is only he who produces marketable food surplus on his farm. The muzhik is only a subsistence farmer. In these circumstances, it is only the kulak who can help the country to get

rid of the persistent food shortages and drive the spectre of famine from this land.

Cannot the muzhik be helped through industrialization? If he can be given employment in ancillary agro-industries, then the population pressure on land can be reduced, and fragmentation of holdings can be checked.

The question we are faced with is that of the dispossessed farmer. If he is to be absorbed in the industries we are faced with the irresistible conclusion that the agricultural and industrial sectors have to grow together.

Garaudy Looks at Marx's Evolution

MOHIT SEN

IT is fitting in this year of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Karl Marx that one attempts to the utmost of one's capacity to accelerate the process of acquiring the culture of Marxism. This is a process of the constant discovery and the renewal of the thought of Marx, whose relevance only increases as the process of the socialist transformation of human society advances. It is refreshing, even rather wonderful, at such a time to find new light on Marx, as one gets in Roger Garaudy's *Karl Marx, the Evolution of His Thought* (International Publishers, New York, 1967, 5.95 dollars.) It is a really rare accomplishment when, after all these years and after so many previous efforts, a Marxist analyst is able to offer a completely fresh and thoroughly stimulating vision of the growth of Marx into a Marxist and the development of his methodology. This is the accomplishment of Roger Garaudy.

Garaudy is by no means a stranger, at least to the middle generation of Marxists in India.

A member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France and one of its outstanding theoreticians, he became known to many Indians after the end of the Second World War by his penetrating literary essays on Sartre, Camus, Mauriac and Koestler, collected together under the title *Literature of the Graveyard*. On reflection it might appear that the approach then adopted was, partially at least, somewhat sectarian but the sparkle and thrust of the criticism, the mastery of the material under review and the nobility of vision as well as language still linger in memory.

One next came across the power of Garaudy's intellect when one read his really philosophical critique of Stalin's *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, where the roots of dogmatism were traced to mechanical materialism and the neglect of the Hegelian heritage, Lenin's injunctions to the contrary notwithstanding. And now this third encounter only increases one's appreciation of the high Marxist theoretical level of Roger Garaudy

which, of course, is the result of the generally developed state of Marxist thought in France.

Encounters such as these convince one that the internationalism of the world Communist movement should not be narrowly understood to mean only an agreement on fundamentals or on present tactics. It should not be reduced to a mere exchange of experience of current revolutionary practice. All these are of undoubted importance. But of equal value is the assimilation of creative quests of Marxists working in different spheres and in different countries and in different languages in the sphere of theory—of philosophy, political economy, aesthetics and the like. Exchange at this level is dreadfully meagre and impoverishes the movement as a whole. If scientific communism is a science it should be treated as a science, that is, it should involve constant exchange of views and constant effort to keep up-to-date.

The first new point made by Garaudy is about the environment in which Marx grew up

(incidentally one wishes that A. Cornu's massive work on Marx and Engels was available in English). How many know for example that Marx's father, Hirschel Marx, organised in 1834 a banquet in honour of German liberal deputies; that Jenny von Westphalen's father inculcated in his son-in-law a love for Saint-Simon; that Gans, one of the teachers Marx liked best in the University of Berlin (who was a Hegelian attracted by Saint-Simon) wrote: "Just as master and slave once confronted each other, then the patrician and plebeian, and still later the lord and the vassal, today we have the parasite and worker Future history will have to speak out again and again on the struggle of working men against the middle classes". Still further in Trier itself the Fourierist Ludwig Gall wrote (in 1835): "The moneyed, privileged class and the working class are fundamentally opposed to each other by reason of their contrary interests; the situation of the former improves to the degree that the situation of the latter deteriorates, becomes more precarious and wretched".

The Second Point

The second new point is about the somewhat remoter influences on the making of Marx. The debt to Hegel is; of course, well brought out but this, in many ways, is now well known. The contribution of Feuerbach and the distance from him that Marx had to travel ("Feuerbach reversed Hegel's system, Marx, the Hegelian method") is concretised. Garaudy is of the view that the basic idea of Feuerbach was alienation: "Man transforms the subjective, that is, the actuality of which only exists in his mind, his perception, his imagination into something existing beyond his thought, his perception, his imagination..... Thus, the goal of history is changed. For Hegel, it is the realisation of God in man, for Feuerbach, it is the realisation of man when he ceases to project himself in God. The goal of Feuerbach is to liberate man from religion and to arrive at the unity of man and man. It

is this humanism that Feuerbach calls communism". He very aptly points out that one cannot pass from Feuerbach's abstract man, unless one knows him in action, in history. The link between man and nature, according to Feuerbach is direct; it does not consist of labour but of contemplation.

Telling Point

Now the question arises as to how Marx passed beyond Feuerbach, how he came to realise man in action, historical man and how he established the link between man and nature in labour. Garaudy makes the telling point that this was possible only when Marx got to know and understand the working class in action. It was in Paris, in 1845, that Marx developed into a Marxist. It was this immediate and lively contact with this new historical class that gave historical concreteness to his ideas and changed speculative communism into scientific communism. If Marx gave the working class its self-consciousness, it was the working class that gave Marx his consciousness. If the great French Revolution had found its theory in Hegel, the practice of the working class gave the material base to the evolving thought of Marx.

This apart, Garaudy breaks new ground in outlining the contribution of Fichte. It was this great German philosopher who, as it were, gave the concept of praxis to Marx. Praxis, that is, the concept that "action determined the future in opposition to being; in other words, in opposing to being (that is, the existing world) the ideal that it must still realise, that is, the 'ought to be'". The governing idea of Fichte's system is that of man the creator, the idea that man is what he does. Marxism "accepts and transcends one of the valid themes of existentialism. Human existence is not a thing which is *given* but a thing to *make*". For Fichte "practice is definitely the engagement of the whole man in the collective effort to make history, to transform nature and build society. Fichte has not only extracted the

'active side of knowledge' but has posited man's activity on the highest level; above all, the transformation of the subjective into the objective by human activity".

In the opinion of Roger Garaudy, the three principal streams of Marxist thought converge in the notions of praxis and alienation. Kant-Hegel-Fichte: the role of human initiative; the self-creative character of man. English political economy: gave praxis a concrete meaning, that is, labour. French socialism: society as a collective organism of labour, of collective activity and activity related to a specific class.

The third new point comes out in a most exciting discussion: elaboration of Marxist materialism and Marxist dialectics. "One of the major merits of Marxist materialism is that it does not treat materialism as if Kant, Fichte and Hegel had never existed". The two essential theses of Marxist materialism are stated to be: "The thesis of the humanisation of nature, showing that knowledge and control of nature cannot abstract the subject from 'praxis'; and the thesis of the primacy of matter, providing that if what la Palisse said was true, that is, the object cannot be *known* without a subject, it is an absurdity to say that it cannot *exist* without it To recognise that we *know* nature only by the activity it brings to bear on us and by the activity we bring to bear on it, is by no means to deny that it *exists* outside of us, independently of us, before and after us". Thus, Garaudy gives us the full richness of Marxist materialism and of its original and comprehensive solution of the problem of the subject-object relation, indeed, of the whole process of cognition.

Subtle Treatment

Equally illuminating and subtle is Garaudy's treatment of Marxist dialectics. He emphasises at the outset that Marx did not reverse the whole of Hegel. Marx rejected the system of Hegel and reversed the method of Hegel. And this reversal Garaudy puts in an unusual, let it be said in an unusually illuminating, manner: "For Hegel, contradiction

is a moment in totality. For Marx, totality is a moment in contradiction..... Contradiction is the central category of the Hegelian *method*; totality is the central category of the Hegelian *system*..... To Hegel, totality was self-limiting and this is what gave rise to contradiction—(for Marx) it is not the universal that has primacy and is self-limiting, but the particular that necessarily transcends itself, since it does not carry within it the condition of its existence. Dialectics is at one and the same time the insufficiency of being and the summons to thought". For Marx "it is the development of the contradiction, the transcendence of the negation into the negation of the negation, that engenders new totalities". Again and again he returns to the theme that dogmatism and schematism are the very antithesis and totally alien to the

dialectical method of Marx. Any such dogmatism and schematism is a regression from Marxism to simultaneously a "scientist materialism" and idealist, speculative dialectics. His conclusion is that "there exists no closed, complete, definitive list of the laws of dialectics. The laws known at present constitute a provisional balance sheet of our knowledge; social practice and scientific experiment alone enable us to expand it further".

In the rest of his work, Garaudy takes us through the basic principles of Marxist political economy but from a new angle, that is, from the angle of the application of the dialectical method and from the viewpoint of the working out of the basic concepts of alienation and praxis. A high point here is the contrasting of empiricism to dialectical materialism. After all, it is empiricism from which one can start

off towards vulgar, apologetic economics and to sterile positivism. The empiricists "profess to give consciousness an absolute point of departure, a first start, a given sensuous representation, without seeing that their so-called 'facts' have already been moulded from concepts nourished by previous theory and practice. In the *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx defined the concrete as "a process of synthesis, as a result, and not as a starting point". One should neither start from nor rest content with appearance. Abstraction, approximation, verification—such is the method that Marx employed."

Garaudy also takes up a discussion, refreshing even if not particularly new, of the Marxist theory of the state, of strategy and tactics as well as the basic organisational principles of the Communist Parties.

Whither Nagaland?—V

PANNALAL DAS GUPTA

UNDER the leadership of the Naga National Council, a Naga nationalism grew among the eighteen or so Naga tribes and sub-tribes. This nationalism (some prefer to call it sub-nationalism or proto-nationalism) comes into conflict with Indian nationalism. On account of this conflict we look upon the integration of the Naga tribes and the emergence of Naga nationalism as an evil. In other words, we take a narrow view of things. We look upon Naga nationalism as a force detrimental to our national interest. We fail to see that from the point of view

of social progress, evolution of a common bond between the Naga tribes who had for centuries carried on bloody inter-tribal feuds and thus came to be known as head-hunters, this is not an insignificant achievement or a thing to be condemned.

If the responsibility had devolved upon us of putting down their internecine feuds, of unifying them and bringing them into the mainstream of modern civilization, we would have found our-selves unequal to the task. If we claim that we could have done it, we have to answer why we have failed to achieve national integration—the integration of the various linguistic groups like the Bengalees, Assamese, Maharashtrians, Tamils, etc. The fact is that separatist ten-

dencies have appeared almost all over India, endangering the very concept of Indian nationalism.

If we could lay the foundation of an Indian nationalism that would have embraced all the old and distinct nationalities, if we could develop the strength of unity within the country, we could have rid ourselves of our inner weaknesses and approached the tribal peoples living in the remote corners of this land, with the message of Indian unity. Suffering as we do from disunity and discord, how can we claim to have removed, or helping to remove, the disunity of the Naga and other hill tribes and integrate them with the civilized (?) Indian nationalities?

The Nagas must be given the credit for having achieved a great

The previous instalments of this report appeared in Mainstream, June 1, 8, 15 and 22, 1968.

thing for themselves, for India and for civilization at large, if they have been able to stop their feuds on their own. An India committed to democracy cannot follow the old imperialist policy of sowing the seeds of disunity among the tribes and taking advantage of that. Our problem is how best to synthesize Naga nationalism with Indian nationalism.

Many obstacles stood in the way of welding the eighteen tribes into a single national entity. They do not have a common language, each tribe having its own dialect which is quite unintelligible to others. Broken Assamese or English is the language of inter-tribal communication. Nor do they have a common religion. The majority are Christian, but non-Christian tribes are still there. Indeed, many are of the opinion that hatred for India is the only factor that brought about their unification.

Another Notion

This is partially but not wholly true just as it would be an exaggeration to say that Indian nationalism was a product of our hatred for the British. A common hatred may keep together some people for some time but without the positive factors of historical and social affinities, no nationalism worth the name can be built solely upon hatred and enmity.

Another notion, held by some others that Christianity has given them their new nationalism, is also a partial truth. In fact, Christianity is not just a religion to them. They took to Christianity so spontaneously because in the Christian missionaries they saw the light of civilization and the path to freedom. The main inspiration is therefore neither anti-Indianism nor Christianity but the urge for freedom. It would be wrong to say that this freedom means freedom from India.

In fact, it is the urge for breaking through their centuries-old tribal insularity and overcoming their backwardness that lies at the root of their indepen-

dence movement. They want all the benefits of modern civilization, they want to make the rigours of hill life a thing of the past.

Viewing things superficially, we may praise the cultural values of their ancient civilization. Little do we know that they—the Nagas and other hill tribes—themselves refuse to be hypnotized by their own past. In education, science and every other field, they want to be modern. This general awakening is taking the form of so-called nationalist movement. Unless we understand this urge and impulse we cannot at all get an insight into Naga psychology.

The next question is, what would be the message of Indian civilization for these people—the message that can attract them to India? That message must be one that ensures their salvation from the backwardness imposed by history, that holds out the promise and gives a programme of all-round socio-economic progress. The basis of this programme must be secular and not religious. Religion cannot serve the purpose. Even the scope for the further propagation of Christianity seems to be limited. Otherwise, the Christian rebel Nagas would not have sought Chinese help.

Sudden Turn To China

The decision to turn to China was not taken suddenly. More than a year of discussions and arguments, for and against the proposed step, had preceded before the news of their alliance with China and sending of young men for securing Chinese arms and training, was published. It was their last resort, after their request for help was turned down by the Anglo-American block and Pakistan.

The new move by a section of the rebel Nagas who were Christians gave rise to differences in their own camp, as many Christian Naga leaders, especially those of the Church, did not take kindly to the idea of soliciting help from the atheist and anti-religious Chinese. Notwithstanding the disapproval

of the Church leaders and the differences among themselves, the contact with China is now an accomplished fact.

The Conference of the Federal and State Government leaders held at Dimapur on April 20 last, failed to elicit a promise from the rebels that they would cease to have any deal with China. In spite of the known differences on this question between rebel leaders like 'General' Kaito Sema, Scato Swu, Kughato Sukhei, etc. on the one hand and Rev. Mhiasieu, Z. Ramyo, etc., on the other, it is not unlikely that most young men in Nagaland are in favour of coming in contact with China. Not only in Nagaland. An undercurrent of opinion desiring contact with China is already there in Tamenglong and Ukhrul areas of Manipur, in the Khasi and Garo Hills and even in the NEFA, although the people in these areas are mostly Christian.

The Conclusion

The conclusion is obvious that Christianity has failed to keep them as anti-Communists. If no solution can be found even now and if armed clashes start again, there is little doubt that a hard core of pro-Chinese elements and leaders will be formed within these tribes and Christianity will have little influence over them. Under the impact of future events a group will inevitably turn to and become staunch Communists, drawing inspiration from China. The future of Naga nationalism will then be a question affecting not only India but also the Christian leaders of other hill tribes.

In the new conflict, Naga nationalism may seek refuge in Indian nationalism and Indian nationalism may get some support from Naga nationalism. Some of the former anti-Indian leaders may take a different view of India. If Kaito, Kughato, Scato, etc., take a firm policy of opposing *entente* with China, Naga nationalism will prove totally inadequate for their struggle. They will have to look for other forces, other methods and other allies. Such

a situation will enable Indian political parties to evolve a common bond of political loyalty among the hill tribes.

In short, Chinese contact or infiltration of Chinese ideology in north-east India may not be an unmixed evil. It may prove to be a blessing in disguise if the threat impels the India parties to approach the hill tribes with their respective ideologies and start local units of their organizations in the hills.

So long, the hill tribes have tried to find the ideological moorings of their freedom movement in their own heritage; they never thought of getting in touch with any Indian party. The whole outlook was one of rejecting everything Indian. Even communism they are prepared to take from China but not from India. They have tried to import ideas of nationalism

and democracy from other countries but hesitated to come closer to Indian democracy or the nationalities of India. The contact with China has not only increased the danger to the national interest of India, it is, at the same time, also going to break the barriers that have so long kept the hill tribes aloof from Indian thoughts and ideas.

Today one can discuss political events at home and abroad with educated Naga young men and women. They take a lively interest in such discussions. Other questions, too can be freely discussed. Such a situation did not exist even a year ago. A patient search for a solution may not be futile now.

There is no single rebel leader in Nagaland or anywhere else in north-east India who enjoys blind faith of the youth. One sees a

situation which is marked by the rise and fall of leaders, not all of whom are remembered. Except A. Z. Phizo there is no father figure and it is quite probable that Phizo's image as a leader remains unimpaired because he is living far away. Once he returns home or is allowed to return home, there is little doubt that he will find it difficult to maintain his unquestioned leadership.

In short, Naga nationalism and all its ingredients are facing an ordeal. Its very basis is shaken and the search for a new basis has become imperative. The time has therefore come for India political leaders of all schools to take a new initiative and make a new approach to the hill tribes. But they must not mouth the same old phrases. They must give new ideas and concepts that may catch the imagination of and inspire the tribal peoples.

Discussion

This discussion on Democracy and Socialism was initiated by Satyapal Dang in Mainstream (May 4, 1968) and was followed up by Bhowani Sen (May 11) and Mohit Sen (June 1).

Socialism and Democracy

H. K. VYAS

I congratulate **Mainstream** on the very useful and vital discussion that has been initiated in its columns on the question of Socialism and Democracy. Satyapal Dang has done a distinct service to the cause of Socialist thought by his article on the subject.

I am afraid Bhowani Sen has taken a too rigid and somewhat pedantic attitude to this problem. I would like to offer some comments and focus some aspects of this problem.

I wish to start with the first proposition, namely how and in what manner should and does the problem of democracy arise in Socialism. We are all familiar with the proposition that in bourgeois democracy freedom of expression and of association exist only formally. Because, the means of production are owned by the capitalist; they have all the resources; and therefore though every citizen *formally* has the right to complete free expres-

sion; except of course to the extent conditioned by a coded law; Yet in actual practice because of the resources being owned and cornered by the capitalist and monopolist classes; this right is more on paper. All this is of course true. But all the same it has to be realised that despite all the limitations, this bourgeois freedom does permit to an extent its utilisation for informing and enlightening public opinion and initiating changes in

thoughts.

Under Socialism all this radically changes. The means of production, and also the means of expression and media of public communications like the press, the radio and television are all owned by the State and society organised in various bodies like the trade Unions, writers Unions etc. To that extent socialism lays the foundation for a much greater and real democracy. But in socialism also the problem of democracy does exist and comes to the fore in another form. Even though all media of mass expression are "owned" by society; yet their *actual control* does vest in some bodies. It is only by the sanction of those bodies that these media of mass expression can be used by any citizen. Now it can happen and it does often happen that if free expression of differences and minority opinions is *not* permitted by these media of mass expression, then inevitably a certain bureaucratisation and ossification start and if let go unchecked, this may degenerate into grave distortions of socialist democracy.

We are all familiar with such a phenomenon which is now called "Cult of Personality". I however think that the distortions that have taken place in various socialist countries and in the Soviet Union during the last days of Stalin, and the spectacle that we now see in China—All these spring from a certain lack of restraint on the system of public expression, which leads to greater rigidity and finally distortions.

In that way the real effective check against such distortions developing in the socialist state is to *permit* full freedom of expression to the minority opinion through the organs of mass communication.

That naturally brings to the fore the question of such right being recognised in the Communist Party also. Bhowani Sen has posed the problem that recognition of such a right would turn the Party into a debating society. I think Bhowani Sen is taking an utterly rigid and dogmatic position on this question. What has been the experience in the international Communist movement?

We all hear even till now that the decisions at various Party Congresses of the Socialist countries are unanimous. Can one seriously believe this to be possible? Even vital changes like, those adopted at the 20th Congress of the CPSU have been "unanimous". To me it looks that a *wrong* and distorted understanding of the principle of Party organisation prevails which identifies *Every* minority *Every Expression of Differences with the Leadership as an anti-Party Trend*.

Unless this position is broken there can be no guarantee that distortions like what are called Personality Cult will not happen again. It should be openly recognised that differences and disagreements with leadership is possible, legitimate and what is *more* the Party should be informed properly as to *What* the *Minority* thinks. Such a change is absolutely necessary in the working of the Communists and this should be so even in countries where the Communists are not the ruling party.

The "principle" which Bhowani Sen is stressing is really the cause of great evil. Would Bhowani Sen deny that this very concept of Party form made it possible for some comrades in the State leadership in our own Party to PREVENT a large number of comrades from knowing the real position of the policies and issues that were under discussions? Then how would Bhowani Sen suggest to overcome such possibilities of distortions?

I would like to stress yet another aspect of the problem of Socialism and Democracy. It has been the experience in every Socialist country that in the first phase after the Revolution, the main direction of advance was laying the basis of rapid industrialisation and heavy Industry. The position in the consumer goods industry for some years amounted to an effort to satisfy the minimum requirements of every section of the population. Since before the revolution quite a large majority of people did not have even that minimum of assured consumer goods available to them (even though there might have lots in the market, they had no purchasing power to secure them)

in the initial period this system met with the needs of the situation at that stage.

Soon however socialism as an economic system had to stand on its own in the matter of great technological changes that were coming in the world economy. Internally the problem of market started asserting. The question of quality, of "profitability" of goods and all such matters become most important. Now in Socialism, the State, the organs of economic planning and management rewarded new production relations. The system of over-centralised planning management and direction became a sort of hinderance at a certain stage. So changes had to be made. What is to be realised is that such an economic system requires *great* initiative, and this is impossible without a corresponding, *democratic* set-up in the political sphere. If this does not happen, shortcomings and distortions inevitably creep in.

I would like to quote here a passage from the Action Programme of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Discussing these very shortcomings, it says.

"These shortcomings were directly caused by the maintenance and constant restoration primarily of the old directive system of management. Economic means, forms of supply and demand and marketing ties were replaced by directives from the centre. Socialist enterprise did not expand. In economic life, independence, diligence, expertise and initiative of the people were not appreciated but rather the contrary, subservience, obedience and even kowtowing to higher ups were."

It is obvious that for the further development of economy socialist work, democracy becomes a vital necessity.

There is yet another aspect of this question.

Socialism cannot mean only the liberation of the working people from the exploitation and domination of the bourgeois class. It must really provide for a fuller expression of the all-sided personality, in a manner much more than bourgeois democracy could ever provide. This means that the people should get the fullest

information about all facts.

Discussing the questions raised by the 20th Congress of the CPSU the late Togliatti came out with the old formulation that the "Cult of Personality" is really a very inadequate explanation of all that had happened. He for the first time raised the question of institutional checks to prevent such phenomenon occurring under Socialism. What then is the meaning of institutional checks? This means the practice of democracy in such a manner that in the name of security unwarranted secrecy is not practised. This also means that in countries where Communists are not the ruling party even in the internal working of the party, the same thing should apply. The Action Programme of the Communists of Czechoslovakia contains a

very apt summarisation of what is needed. It says:

"It is necessary to overcome the holding up, distortion, and incompleteness of information, to remove any unwarranted secrecy of political and economic facts, to publish the annual balance sheets of enterprises, to publish even alternatives to various suggestions and measures, to extend the import and sale of foreign press."

Such a method can effectively and fully inform the people, and that alone can act as a check against distortions of Socialist Democracy.

It is therefore necessary to discuss various measures and concrete manners in which *Democracy* should be really assured in

the Socialist System and as a starting point, in the rearing up of the Communist movement. Reference to the hackneyed expression that the party should be organised as an army have been distorted too many times to stifle all democracy. What is necessary is to inculcate a proper understanding in the whole movement that full expression and information about the alternatives, the positions of the minority and fuller informations about all aspects of political and economic life, with the right of use of the media of mass communications by such alternatives, all these form an essential ingredient to ensure the prevention of gross distortions that have been the bane of the Socialist States and the Communist movement many times in the past.

BOOK REVIEW

APPALLING STUFF

End of Hunger by Satya Dev Jaggi. Publisher: Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi 1967, pp. 44, Price : Rs. 3.

SRI Jaggi has called the play, *End of Hunger*, though, one fails to understand, why he has chosen to give this title to the play; as there seems to be no relation whatsoever between the title and the play itself.

The play pivots around Surinder, who is a lecturer in a college, and his queer relationship with Nandini (the author spells the name as 'Nandani'). They seem to like each other, till Vasumati, who is Vishnu's sister, comes along; and then, almost immediately, Surinder falls for her: "Surinder's leg touches Vasumati's leg, as if accidentally. A thrill runs through him. He looks for similar signs of excitement but finds none, and is visibly disappointed".

Surinder carries on in this strain, getting involved with Vasu.

That he is a pervert is made clear by several instances in the course of the play.

As the play proceeds, we discover that Surinder is not too popular with his students, who say quite a few indecent things about him, which border on the obscene. One wonders, if students in Delhi University, not to speak of girls, talk in that fashion, about anyone, let alone their teachers.

To get back to the main plot, (if, indeed it can be called a plot) Surinder cools off, toward Nandini, but insists, that he cannot forget her; Nandini realizes that he has taken a fancy for Vasumati, but says that she is not jealous of her, because "she is so nice. I am in love with her, myself." It does disturb one to be told that a woman is in love

with another woman. Perhaps a streak of abnormality runs through all the characters in the play.

Vasu, however, is more of a realist, when, on being told that Nandini does not object to this change of heart of Surinder; she says, "A woman can never be reconciled to it, no matter what she might say." Soon afterwards, we realize the truth of the statement, when Vishnu informs Surinder that Nandini has done away with herself. Surinder would have us believe that he holds himself responsible for her death. And he tries to overcome his 'grief' by reading *The Tropic of Cancer*. In comes Vasu, and he tells her that it is a dirty book that he is reading. She checks him, and says that although Miller's vision might seem to be perverted, his portrayal of

the sexual beast is not far from truth, since the beast resides in the heart of all men. Suddenly, Surinder too starts behaving like one, and for that is slapped many a time by Vasu. He is startled back into his proper senses and starts apologizing to her for his behaviour. What astonishes one all the more is that Vasu too starts apologizing for having called him a "sexual beast" and having slapped him. She bursts out crying and insists that what she had said could not be true. Surinder blandly says, "But it is true. I know now it is true. But anyhow does that matter?"

But it does matter a great deal to Vasu, though she does not say anything. "She stares at him with a fixed stony stare and slowly moves towards the door. Then suddenly vanishes from the door" Surinder maintains his smugness right till the end. "He lies down on the settee, and closes his eyes dreaming."

And this is the end of *End of Hunger*. The play deals with the hunger of sex, perhaps 'deals' is not quite the word, for, the play only depicts a perverted young man, and the perversion in the main character is reflected in the other characters. Even at the end, this 'hunger' or craving for sex, does not end. And 'end' means consummation, which the play does not achieve. There is no development or progression, which is so vital to any work of art. The characters do not develop at all, except Nandini, who, the moment she realizes that she is not loved, takes an over-dose of sleeping pills. The rest of them remain static.

Another important ingredient of a play is the dialogue, which should be such, that it makes the play readable. Here too, the reader is disappointed.

Apart from all this, considering the fact that the playwright is a lecturer in English in a college, the mistakes he makes are simply appalling:

"Nandini enters the room without announcing. She taps the floor with her right-hand shoe".

"Another gem: Drawing-room in Vishnu's house. Pictures of a few nationally important

Indians hang upon the walls. There is too a picture of the late United States President Kennedy, besides that of Tagore, which looks dilapidated, with the glass in the frame broken cross-wise".

There are instances, galore where the author makes such mistakes. Surely a Lecturer in English in a college is expected to speak and write better English than the samples given above?

—Ranjana

A MAGAZINE OF PROMISE

SEE—Pictorial Quarterly, Editor : Hali Vats (New Delhi, Price Rs 5 per issue)

IN the field of contemporary Indian journalism, *See*, a pictorial quarterly, has broken new ground, being devoted mostly to non-political and cultural topics.

Two issues of *See* have appeared, (December-February, and March-May). Though the overall production is excellent, the promise and potentiality of the venture has however yet to be fully exploited. In the inaugural number the pride of place has been given to Dr Rasheeduddin Khan's summing up of twenty years of freedom in India. Planning in India today is a very controversial subject. Whatever one's views it needs a more penetrating study. The figures indicating progress that are constantly trotted out by the Government should not be echoed. To say that we have made some progress is true, but we ought to have made it considering the tremendous cost in human and material resources sunk to achieve it. What needs to be studied is: are the results commensurate with the efforts? Dr Khan writes that planning with a welfare premise is a unique experiment. This is a statement which needs to be challenged. If the net national income has been created with the blood and toil of the common man the fruits of it have been cornered by a handful of the new rich. This is the crux of Indian planning today, a fact that needs to be grasped and exposed and not to be buried in a mass of optimistic figures. Dr Khan's style too is involved and cumbersome.

See has done well to focus attention on the cow-slaughter issue. One is always surprised to find

that even the so-called educated people often suffer from the cow-fixation.

The most interesting feature of *See* is the historical studies by Editor Hali Vats himself.

Rest of the features in the first issue, though well written are inconsequential and at times pointless. In *Delhi By Night* one wonders what Saeed Naqvi intends to convey. Is his intension merely to present the seamy side of Delhi to provide, vicarious pleasure to those curious about it or does he have some other purpose?

The second number that covers the period from March to May has, has kept the earlier promise of good overall production. In the *Sun and the Sand*, is highlighted the sandy wastes of Jaisalmer—the spirit and the poetry of the desert the has been aptly caught by Vinod Pande's text. The photographs are excellent and build up the mood of the whole.

In *Teaching and Taught* a survey of education in Delhi, Santha Rungachary has chosen a topic of close concern to the average parent. It is an enlightening article explaining the confused pattern of education in Delhi.

The feature on Banaras makes pleasant reading. This number too has a number of other articles fairly well written and the photographs are its strong points.

Though *See* is beautifully illustrated, is well-written and well-produced, it somehow lacks spice and substance.

However, knowing the difficulties a fledgling magazine has to face, one hopes it would discard its dilettante posture and live up to the task it has set itself.

—P. C.

BIHAR'S SECOND U F GOVERNMENT

(Continued from Page 16)

is not likely to attract any section in the State. Sri Sinha's unpredictable and opportunist ways have put him at loggerheads with the Leftists. The credit for his position in the political life of the State goes to the Leftist forces who twice brought him from the wilderness and placed him at the centre; but this time, because of his own doings, he seems to have planned political suicide. He may think of joining the Congress, but that cannot save him.

Prestige Enhanced

Till now, Sri Shastri has been faring well. His firm opposition to the mines department being given to the Raja has enhanced his prestige. His sympathy for the downtrodden and tactful handling of the Chiri firing have endeared him to the public.

The Revenue Minister, Sri Indradeep Sinha, is preparing to introduce measures to give occupancy rights to share-croppers, abolish the remnants of the zamindari interests and complete the unfinished tasks of land reform. He has proposed a Bataidari board consisting of representatives of the share-croppers, the Government and the landholders at the local level to solve the problem. Opposition to these progressive measures is being put up by the landlords and reactionary parties like the Jana Sangh. Even the Birla-owned "Weekend Review" has launched a campaign of vilification against the Revenue Minister. In the rural areas, the landlords are forcibly trying to evict the share-croppers, and the share-croppers are heroically resisting these attempts—this in spite of the "Naxalbari" bogey raised by the newspapers.

The Bihar Congress is in a demoralised state. The tattered BPCC is involved in a big organisational crisis. Nobody knows whether it can survive it.

When the present BPCC President, Sri Rajendra Mishra, was not given the Congress ticket for the Vidhan Parishad, he became frustrated. He found a handy

excuse when the Muslim nominees of the Congress were defeated and he resigned from the presidential post. Nobody knows why his "soul" was not troubled when the same thing took place in the past.

Anyway, after the resignation of Sri Mishra, Sri Satyendra Narayan Sinha, leader of the Rajput faction, became an aspirant for the presidential gaddi, but Sri Mahesh Prasad Sinha, leader of the Bhumihar faction put up Sri Kamal Nath Tiwary MP. Sri Tiwary had the backing of the supporters of Sri B. N. Jha still left in the Congress. Then began talk of compromise, and Central Ministers from Bihar tried to impose Sri K. B. Sahay as a compromise candidate. On May 24, when the delegates assembled to elect the President, it seemed they were not prepared to accept Sri Sahay. Sri Sahay declined to contest. Sri Satyendra Sinha had not filed his own nomination paper thinking that Sri Sahay would be unanimously elected. When the supporters of Sri Sinha saw that he was going to be excluded, they disturbed the meeting and made the election impossible. At the time of writing it is not certain what will happen at the meeting fixed for June 23. Sri R. L. Singh Yadav is said to have drifted away from Sri Sahay and come nearer to Sri Satyendra Sinha in a bid to form the alliance of 'Yaduvansi' and 'Raghuvansi'. Sri Jagjivan Ram, whose hostility to the Rajputs has never been a secret, is reported to have changed his attitude considerably, but he does not wield much influence over the delegates.

Fresh Chargesheets

Meantime the Aiyar Commission has started work and the Government has been asked to file fresh chargesheets against the six former Congress Ministers. The Commission is likely to have its regular sittings in September. Recently the theft of eight files from the River Valley Projects Department, which were wanted in connection with the inquiry,

has created a sensation and brought to light the collusion of bureaucrats.

Trouble has started in the Chotanagpur region. The tribals are again demanding a separate state—Jharkhand State. Sri S. K. Bage has issued a statement supporting the demand. It is said that the new movement has the blessings of Sri K. B. Sahay. Maybe he wants the new State because there is no prospect for him to come to power in the present State of Bihar. The missionaries and Sri N. E. Horo, a former Shoshit Dal Minister, are said to be actively behind the trouble. The newspapers are trying to camouflage the real elements by putting the blame on Marxist Communists who do not exist there. The tribals have been neglected since 1947; none has cared to improve their economic and social lot. They have been made use of among others by their own opportunist leaders. Now they are again being incited by vested interests.

The Front Government faces a difficult job—to better the economic condition of the State, to improve the law and order situation and to curb lawlessness among students. Moreover, the Government has to curtail the hold of the bureaucracy. The bright feature is that the Government still enjoys much goodwill among the public.

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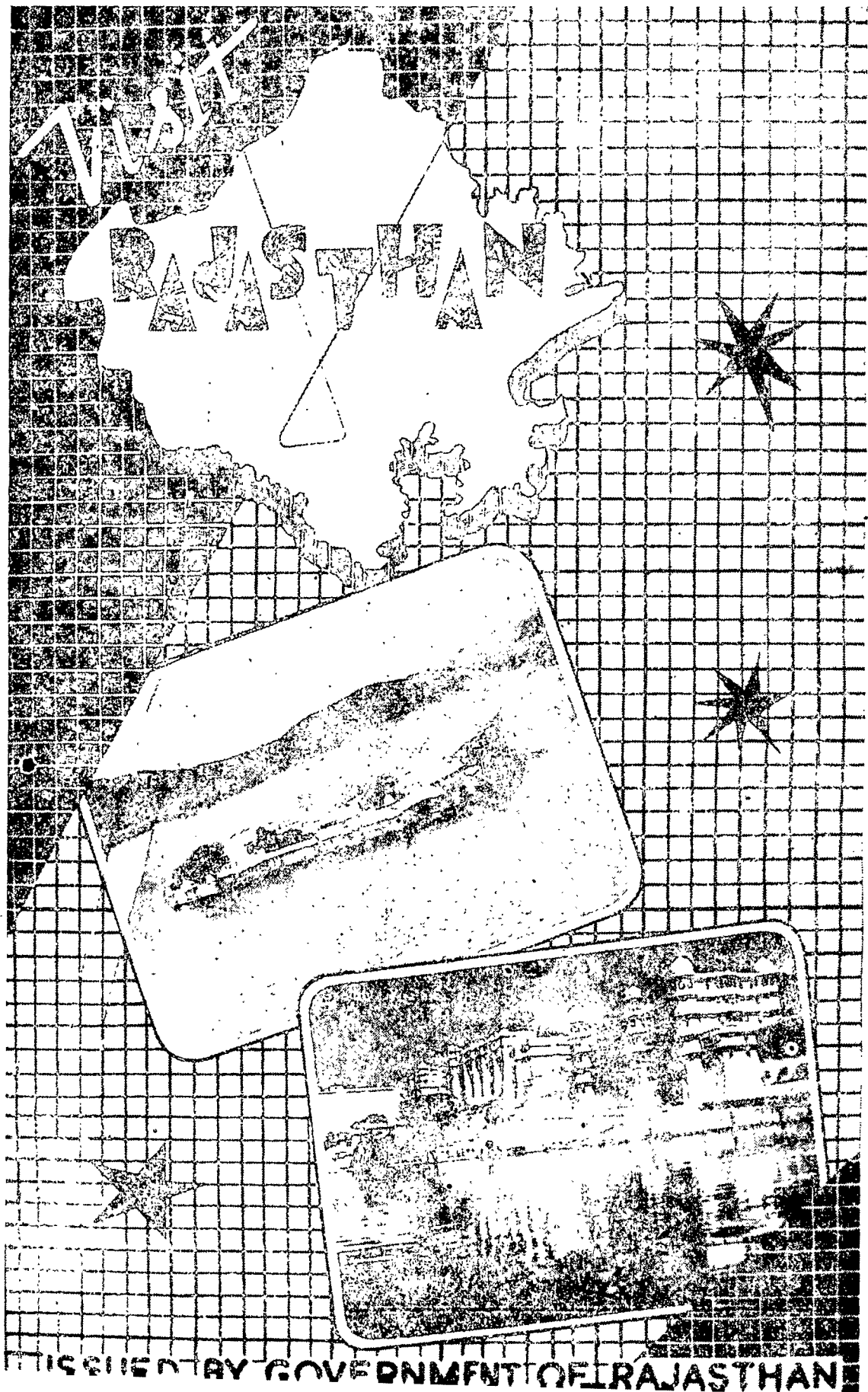
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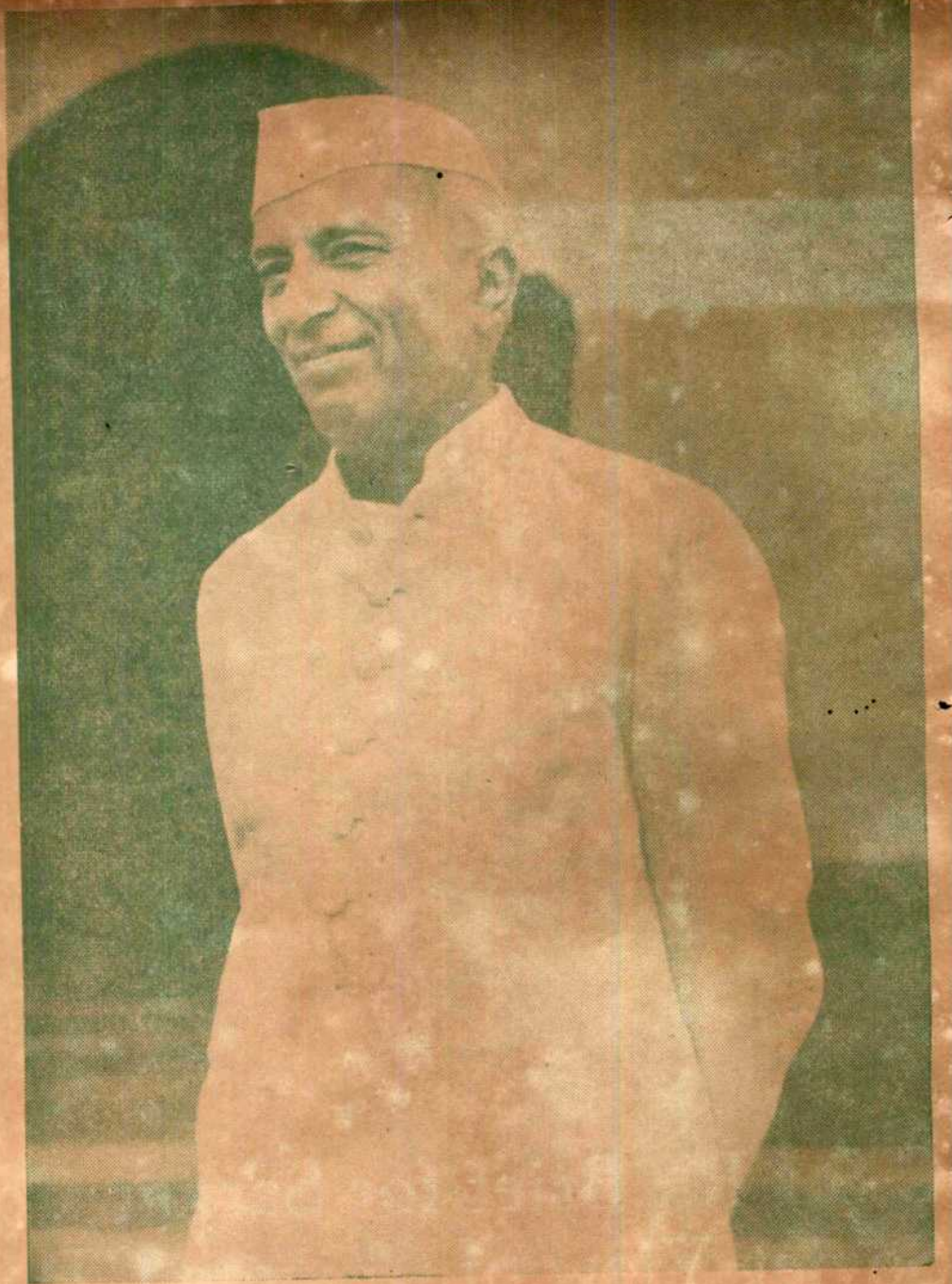
SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1968

35 P

C S I R : Brief for Sarkar Committee
Soviet View of Chinese C P
NEFA Administrative Set-up
I. F. Stone on Significance of McCarthy

Dange Continues His Thesis

Can a Country Have More Than One Communist Party?



No government can afford to ignore the urges of the common people. After all, democracy has its basis on those very urges and if any government flouts them, it is pushed aside and other governments take it over.

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NOT FOR THE SCRAP-HEAP

IN the present confused and frustrating situation in which the parties of the Left by and large show a perplexing preference for underlining the more or less inconsequential differences among themselves rather than for earnestly seeking to put together the common factors that can make for purposeful unity in their ranks, any initiative towards positive socialist consolidation, even if it emanates from the most unlikely quarters, merits serious consideration.

The Praja Socialist Party has, because of the load of prejudices it accumulated over long years and because of the unfortunate ties with reactionary groups and vested interests partly as a result of these prejudices, reduced itself to a position of relative unimportance in national life. At the same time, electoral setbacks and the failure of attempts to work out satisfactory equations with the SSP have not prevented the leaders of the PSP from struggling hard to keep the party going and to maintain its identity. Again, in the absence of a constructive attitude to the parties and groups pledged to the

goal of socialism, the PSP found itself in the questionable company of regional, linguistic and other chauvinistic and sectarian groups.

In this background, it is quite significant that the party now seeks to overcome the sad consequences of past mistakes in order to take its place among the socialist forces in the country, although doubts will inevitably arise when the PSP leaders mention the BKD in the same breath as the SSP, the CPI, and the CPM.

However, this does not appear to be enough justification for the entirely negative and hostile attitude Sri George Fernandes has chosen to adopt toward's the PSP's move. It is hardly fair to dismiss the PSP's initiative, however belated and however inadequate, as of "no consequence."

Sri Fernandes, despite his known differences with the dominant sections of the SSP leadership over association with organisations like the Shiv Sena and the Jana Sangh, seems bent on sticking fast to the provenly unsatisfactory concept of a non-Congress spectrum embracing various opposition parties "from the extreme Right to the extreme Left" on the incomprehensible basis of "agreement on a minimum programme." Such a concept was perhaps excusable in the context of the Fourth General Election when the prime task appeared to be to break the monopoly of power held by the Congress Party. But subsequent experience in the many coalitions in which both Left and Right participated has shown that contradictions in approach to basic problems affecting the common people make the implementation of a "minimum programme" unworkable even if one is accepted by all the constituent parties for the sake of preventing the return of the Congress to power. Uttar Pradesh in the past and Madhya Pradesh even now provide eloquent proof that such an approach is not likely to lead even to limited political gains for the Left.

In fact, even in coalitions in which Left parties have occupied a dominant position, it has been found that the lack of purposeful unity can successfully come in the way of implementation of a minimum programme to which most of the constituent parties honestly subscribe. The current example is of course Kerala, where mutual suspicions among the progressive parties is the biggest single factor making for continuing instability of administration and discontent among the people.

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The PSP's initiative certainly suffers from limitations, chief among them being the party's reluctance to spell out clearly on the basis of clear-cut social, political and economic aims which are the "likeminded" parties and groups it has in mind. It is true that terms like "democratic" and "socialist" used by the PSP can be interpreted variously to suit needs as they arise. But it should also be noted that there has been substantial evidence of furious rethinking in the party on its attitude to the other parties of the Left: it has undertaken the process of shedding the Asoka Mehta legacy of purblind anti-Communism, a move which deserves to be described as courageous in the context of the renewed attempts on the part of reactionaries in the country, with due encouragement from the Right wing of the Congress, to bring about polarisation on the basis of an anti-Communist alliance. Even Sri Golwalkar has now openly come out in support of such polarisation. His remarks are no doubt meant as a directive to the Jana Sangh to make use of the "anti-Congress" alliances to ensure the isolation of the Communists and split the ranks of other Socialist parties.

In our context, only those parties which stand for radical socio-economic changes leading to the elimination of vested interests of various kinds can be considered democratic. Prima facie, therefore, the concept of alliance between democratic forces put forward by the PSP now and by other Leftists earlier, should be taken to exclude not only openly anti-socialist parties and groups but also those whose basis is communal, caste or linguistic domination or exclusiveness. Democracy and secularism cannot be divorced; nor can democracy and the goal of socialism. It is this basic truth that the Leftist parties in the country must frankly recognise

in order to shape their attitude to the different political factors properly. The PSP's initiative would have been worth it if it helps to start a fruitful dialogue on these broad lines.

It is certainly not in doubt that the PSP, due largely to its own mistakes, is today quite a weak party. It is also true that the PSP has not played a consistently constructive role in strengthening the United Fronts which alone can in the final analysis provide a viable alternative to the Congress. But neither its weakness nor its mistakes should make the other Leftist parties sneer at its effort to make a new start. For its part, the PSP should not allow itself to be side-tracked into rigid positions which can only help to isolate and weaken it further. Herein lies the weakness of the present PSP stand: it is yet to come out in firm support of a united front of Left forces, for Left unity in today's conditions can be achieved only through the working of the united front.

Wisdom and political maturity require that all the Leftist parties begin anew the search for firm basis on which all parties, groups and individuals genuinely believing in the socialist goal and in secular democracy can come together to offer a mighty challenge to the powerful combination of vested interests and communal and other reaction.

Neither the PSP nor any of the other Leftist parties can in today's situation afford to take up a self-righteous attitude, for such an attitude can only serve to accelerate the process of disintegration of progressive forces with tragic consequences for the future of the country. It is the responsibility of all such parties to see that one more initiative is not unceremoniously thrown on the scrapheap of history.

New Delhi Skyline

THE UNEASY LULL

THERE is an uneasy lull in the Capital's political weather giving rise to misgivings that this may be a prelude to a storm.

Would the storm break out at the Centre, or will its epicentre be somewhere in the outlying regions, possibly the hills and valleys of the north-east? Speculations galore one comes across, and each and every one of such speculations has its own arguments and evidences to back it. And yet the imponderables

persist, and nobody seems to know where matters really stand.

A favourite question asked in season and out of season in New Delhi is: is the Prime Minister's position stable? Has she gained in strength and influence? The answers differ according to the camp in which one is discussing the subject. And yet it is possible to generalise though within certain limitations. For instance, the National Integration meeting at Srinagar has helped her

politically. The highlighting of communal danger has been a definite political gain for Smt Gandhi, since the communal forces have made a particular target of her, more than any of her senior Cabinet colleagues. The Srinagar meeting has also enabled her to know whom she can depend on in the fight against communalism: the strong support she could muster from Sri Brahmananda Reddy and Sri V. P. Naik on the one hand, and

Sri Bhupesh Gupta and Dr. Gajendragadkar on the other are significant. The cornering of the Jana Sangh has also been a political gain; and it is clear that on this specific issue at least, any noise by SSP in Parliament will not assure it support from other Left benches.

If the Srinagar meeting has proved to be beneficial, the same cannot be said about the handling of the Assam crisis, a major issue of national integration that faces the Central Government today. The Cabinet deadlock over it has not been resolved, thanks mainly to Sri Morarji Desai's obduracy on the question of law-and-order being granted to the autonomous Hill unit. The issue is allowed to drift, and there has been an unusual amount of wishful thinking that the Hill leaders would get divided at their conference at Tura. In other words, the absence of a central policy is sought to be covered up by wishing for rift in the opposite camp.

Political advance has practically come to a halt in the much more difficult terrain of Nagaland. As a result, the Government may land itself once again in military operations which will no doubt make any long-range settlement more difficult. At the same time, the present dilemma facing the Government is that a mere cease-fire without a massive political offensive, has been working to the advantage of those who have been actively building channels of communication and arms movement from China.

Peking's designs have actually added a new dimension to the crisis: reports of a Chinese move

for a federation of Nagas, Mizos and Kachins are not wholly discounted in New Delhi, though it is pointed out that the Nagas and the Mizos have their own inner contradictions.

The Mizos are sustained by their direct links across the border to Pakistan from where they get all their supplies: there are however reports that the Psk authorities are getting a little worried about the repercussions of the policy of backing the Mizo revolt, for there is the danger of the infection spreading to the neighbouring Hill tracts in East Pakistan.

However, New Delhi can hardly draw consolation from any future worries for Pakistan on this count. Right now, the problem of the Nagas and the Mizos is one of the most baffling that the Central Government has faced since Independence. And if a third front is added to it by letting political discontent in the Khasi-Jaintia Hills flare up into large-scale violence, the authority of the Centre is bound to be shaken all along the thousand-mile border. The immediate impact will be felt in Darjeeling where the Gorkha League's demand for autonomy is sure to come up. Slowly the rumblings are bound to come nearer home, and even Sheikh Abdullah may shake off his present state of demoralisation.

* * *

VIEWED in this explosive background—with no signs of a bold statesmanlike approach—there is an air of unreality in all the factional goings-on at the Centre. The party bosses in the Congress go on planning how to

curb the Prime Minister. Sri S.K. Patil has been bragging that he has advised her to rely upon the collective wisdom of all the senior leaders—which means in plain terms that she should agree to be the mouthpiece of the bosses.

The main problem for the party bosses is that they can find no acceptable successor to Smt Gandhit. Somehow, Sri Morarji Desai and the Syndicate have not yet been able to agree to a deal, while although Sri Chavan was found to be very close to the Syndicate during the last AICC meeting, it would perhaps be incorrect to think that Sri Chavan would agree to be a Syndicate puppet.

In Smt Gandhi's camp, one section strongly favours her alliance with Sri Desai to offset any Syndicate combine with Sri Chavan, but the Assam episode has shown the risk of such a strategy. Besides, the rather embarrassing exposure of the business activities of Sri Desai's renowned son in a section of the press may touch off a first-class crisis for the father's political career. On the other hand, the experience of the National Integration meeting shows that it is possible for Smt Gandhi and Sri Chavan to find a working equation. Some of Smt Gandhi's political advisers believe in the wisdom of the maxim that there need be no permanent enemies even if there may be no permanent friends. In other words, placed as she is, it is likely that she would not irreparably alienate either Sri Chavan or Sri Desai—at least, that is what a section in her camp seems to think.

The Syndicate's frustration in

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not being able to dislodge or to dictate to her has been considerably accentuated in recent weeks. Now, all its spleen is directed against her lieutenants, and it would like to hound out some of them. During the last month's AICC session, Sri Atulya Ghosh was reported to have been going round saying that his grouse against the Prime Minister was over her lieutenants; let her discard some of them and Sri Ghosh and his Syndicate worthies would stand by her. As a follow-up, one hears nowadays in Delhi of Sri Ghosh launching almost a veritable crusade against Sri Dinesh Singh. Presumably, the Syndicate calculation is that Sri Dinesh Singh beign a controversial figure in the Prime Minister's camp, is the most vulnerable. However with the Syndicate stock being low at the moment, specially Sri Atulya Ghosh's, such a campaign would not carry much weight, particularly when it is known that what has worried Sri Ghosh most is that some of his adversaries in West Bengal politics are reported to have easy access to Sri Dinesh Singh.

At the State-level politics, the Syndicate has been trying to consolidate itself but not with much success. The latest is the case of Bihar. Just at present, the Syndicate is back-

ing the Rajput faction in Bihar, led by Sri Satyendra Narain Sinha. At the Centre, the protagonists of Bihari Rajputs are Dr Ram Subhag and Sri Satya Narain Sinha. This group is interested in keeping up the deadlock in the Bihar Pradesh Congress over the election of PCC chief. Realising that they themselves would not be able to capture this post—a key post in an election year—their strategy is to prevent a smooth contest so that a case may be prepared for an ad hoc choice made by the Congress Parliamentary Board, where the Syndicate commanding the majority would look after the interest of the Rajput faction. In Bihar politics, Smt Gandhi's supporters are not to be found among the Rajputs; while the main body of her supporters have gone out of the Congress with Sri Benodananda Jha and Sri Bhola Paswan, the remaining ones are ranged against Rajput domination in the PCC.

In West Bengal, Sri Atulya Ghosh has managed to choose his own men for the Congress list for the mid-term poll. This has inevitably led to the crystallisation of a dissident group although it could make no mark in the Central Election Committee. How far this dissident group will undermine Sri Ghosh's position is yet

to be seen.

Sri Atulya Ghosh himself is not yet out of his torments; beginning from early this month, Sri Ashu Ghosh has threatened to come out with a series of public exposures—more startling than those he has already released. Interestingly enough, Sri Atulya Ghosh has so far given no indication of his readiness to take legal action against the Ashu Ghosh disclosures.

A diplomatic discourtesy of first-class magnitude was committed in New Delhi on Sunday morning when Chairman Ne Win of Burma had a brief stopover at Palam while flying back home from London. Only the Deputy Chief of Protocol was present at the airport to receive him. Not even a Minister of State was assigned the job, while the protocol demanded that at least a Cabinet Minister or the Vice-President should have greeted Chairman Ne Win on behalf of the President.

With all the fanfare of a new drive by the External Affairs Ministry to strengthen friendly ties with Asian countries, one finds no explanation for this act of forgetfulness towards our next-door neighbour.

July 2

Observer

WASHINGTON LETTER

New Focus on Asia

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A reassessment of American policy in Asia after its greatest setback as a result of the Vietnam war has so far been undertaken neither by the US State Department nor the Pentagon. The tussle between the Hawks and the Doves is not yet over. Although the tough line has met with disaster at the hands of the Vietcong, the Hawks have not yet lost their ta-

lons, while the Doves do not take a straight-forward line of total American withdrawal from Indo-China. This is very clearly reflected in the stalling tactics now being followed by Mr Averell Harriman at the Paris talks.

However, it is now clear for Washington that the line of all-out aggression in Vietnam has failed; equally clear has been the fact that this US setback will

have its inevitable impact upon all the countries of Asia, particularly in southern region. If there is talk of the "vacuum" following the British withdrawal from the Indian Ocean, there is going to be no less a vacuum following the fiasco of American policy in Vietnam.

Although it would be naive to expect that automatically the system of regional military alliances

would collapse and the US would return to a policy of isolationism after thirty years, there is no gainsaying the fact that re-thinking on the wisdom of the policy of dependence on US arms has already started in South-east Asia. The ready interest with which Smt Indira Gandhi was received recently in Australia, for instance, is significant: even Australian foreign policy which is very heavily committed to Washington cannot continue as of old—the need for earning Asian respectability is very urgently felt by Australian authorities.

Obviously such re-thinking is bound to be much more pronounced in other countries of South Asia. The might of the US Seventh Fleet will no doubt evoke less fear in the minds of the independent peoples of this area just as it will instill less confidence in their reactionary circles which dreamt of holding on to power with the help of American arms.

It is in the background of this crisis in US foreign policy in Asia that Washington is keenly interested in New Delhi's present foreign policy approach. Although there has been a noticeable absence of any significant pronouncement on Vietnam by Smt Gandhi during her recent South-East Asian tour, the fact that New Delhi is trying to attach greater importance to its relations with Hanoi has not been missed by the US authorities: the decision to appoint Dr Shelvankar as the Indian Consul-General in North Vietnam has a definite political overtone underlining the added importance with which the Indian Government would be viewing its activities in Hanoi. There are also other indications about the possibility of improved relations between India and DRVN.

China Policy

While the US authorities have yet to come out with any new policy towards China, there are reports to suggest that the lobby in Washington which is in favour of making up with Peking—with the object of isolating Moscow—

has gained considerably in recent months. The fact that, unlike in Korea, the Chinese armed personnel did not come to Vietnam to fight the Americans has been widely noticed, and in Washington this is interpreted as further proof of the Mao regime's unwillingness to fight the Americans.

Secondly, the stepping up of Peking's offensive against Moscow—confined not merely to abusive propaganda but extended to other more dangerous fields as well—has been noted with satisfaction by the China experts in the State Department. China's recent efforts to strengthen her ties with West Germany—even for the purpose of nuclear expansion programme—have also been noted by the US authorities as further proof of Peking's growing antagonism with the rest of the Communist bloc, particularly with Moscow.

Viewed against this background, there is likely to be little enthusiasm on the part of Washington, for the old Ashoka Mehta line that India could expect massive US aid on the plea that India would fight the "Free World's" battle against China. It would be unreal to expect that by magnifying the China menace, New Delhi can get the US Government to underwrite all its economic requirements. At a time when Washington itself is getting ready for making overtures to Peking the bankruptcy of the Ashoka Mehta time is not difficult to appreciate.

New Postures

At the same time, the debacle of their Vietnam policy is bound to make the American policy-makers more desperate in search of new postures in South Asia. For, a humiliating retreat from Vietnam has to be compensated for by striving to build footholds in this region. It is in this context that one has to evaluate the recent reports of the US-backed intrigues in Burma. The possibility of a section of the Naga underground getting closer to the Americans—while posing to be opposed to the pro-Peking wing—has to be taken into account, while the American inte-

rests in the Mizo rebellion—routed via Pakistan—can hardly be underestimated.

With regard to Pakistan also, the present American policy needs to be carefully scrutinized, particularly after its Vietnam misadventure. It is naive to assume that since the Pakistan Government has come closer to China, the US would cool off in its approach to Rawalpindi. For one thing, the US assessment does not regard the Chinese intrusion as a formidable challenge to its own interests in Pakistan; rather the Pentagon view with much greater concern the Soviet presence in Pakistan. There is noticeable worry in Washington about the outcome of General Yahya Khan's current mission to Moscow. For the development of Moscow's relations with Rawalpindi, it is feared in Washington, might neutralise, if not undermine, an important US foothold at the southern fringe of the Soviet Union.

Besides, the US authorities are least interested in abandoning the political base they have built up over years in the Pakistan administration and the armed forces, in a sizable section of its ruling class as well. The old strategy of operating from Pakistan against non-aligned India has not been totally given up, despite the failure of that policy during the Indo-Pak conflict. It is significant that the Swatantra circles—which are well posted with Washington thinking—still campaign for Indo-Pak entente at the cost of Kashmir: obviously, these circles regard the US influence over Pakistan politics as being still decisive.

Badaber Base

The important position that Pakistan continues to hold in the US global strategy is clearly seen in the current US-Pak negotiations over the future of the American intelligence base at Badaber, near Peshawar. The danger that this spy base poses not only for Pakistan's Communist neighbours but for India cannot be concealed despite repeated American attempts to underplay it: in Pakistan also, the democratic opinion, al-

(Continued on Page 37)

Can A Country Have More Than One Communist Party ? —II

S. A. DANGE

The first instalment of this thesis was published in Mainstream, June 1, 1968. The subsequent interruption was due to the author's absence from the country in connection with his work in the world trade union movement last month. In the coming weeks Mainstream will carry the remaining sections of the thesis. Sections I and II appeared in the first instalment.—Editor

III

16 The first formulation of the basic ideas of scientific socialism, that is modern Communism, was made in *The Communist Manifesto* of 1848. The *Manifesto* was issued on behalf of the Communist League, "a workingmen's association, first exclusively German, later on international, and under the political conditions of the Continent before 1848, unavoidably a secret society." (Engels). The main slogan of proletarian internationalism was given by the *Manifesto*—"Workers of the World Unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains, you have a world to win."

The basic ideas of Communism have since then been enriched by historical experience. After the revolutions of 1848, the League was hounded out by the police and its leaders tried and sentenced in the "Cologne Communist Trial" of 1852. The League was then dissolved.

17. When the working-class recovered sufficient strength for another attack on the ruling classes, the International Working Men's Association sprang up in 1865. This is generally known as the first International in the history of the Communist movement. This Association formed with the express purpose of welding into the body of the whole militant proletariat of Europe and America, could not at once proclaim the principles laid down in the *Manifesto*.

The programme of the Association, drawn up by Marx, was broad enough to be acceptable to the English Trade Unions, to the followers of Proudhon in France, Belgium, Italy and Spain and to the Lassalleans in Germany. The main theme of the International was that "the emancipation of the working-classes must be conquered by the working-classes themselves", that the struggle for the emancipation of the working-classes means not a struggle for class-privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties and "the abolition of all class rule,"

and that this requires the unity of thought and action of the working class of all countries.

18. This First International was an association of individuals but supported by many organisations, including trade unions. It unified the actions of the working class in the continent of Europe. But it was not free from political differences and controversies. There were various ideological trends in its ranks and in the leadership of its General Council, the major controversial group was that of the **Anarchists** led by Bakunin. When after the Franco-German War of 1870, the working-class of Paris overthrew the Government of the bourgeoisie which had capitulated to the enemy, and established the Paris Commune, the controversies in the International assumed an acute form. Though the Commune was not directly led by the International, yet it was the child of the ideas of the International. The Commune frightened the liberals in the International. Bakunin, who never subscribed to the theory of the working-class capturing state power as an instrument to transform society, intensified his political and factional struggle against the leadership of Marx. The International ceased to have any validity in the new situation arising out of the fall of the Commune. It was dissolved in 1876, after its office had been transferred to New York.

"As I view the International condition, it is quite useful to let the formal organisation of the International recede in the background for the time being Events and the inevitable developments and complication of things will by themselves see to it that the International shall rise again in improved form....."(Marx).

The existence of the International was being used by the European Governments to intensify their persecution of the working-class and their leadership. Its dissolution led the reactionaries to think that "the spectre was laid for good." Proletarian inter-

nationalism, the spread of the theory of Marxism and the organisation and consciousness of the working masses had advanced a step further, as a result of the International, its work and the Paris Commune.

There had not arisen yet the Communist Party of the modern period, nor had the International become an authority as such to solve the ideological and factional disputes raised by Bakunin, Proudhon and others. In fact the deep schisms in its ranks both on ideological and organisational matters, the advance of the reactionary forces and the temporary retreat of the working-class dictated the dissolution of the First International.

This was the second dissolution of the organs of the working class movement—the first was of Communist League in 1852 and the second was of the International Working Men's Association in 1876.

19. The First International could not by itself become the clearing house, to decide which of the groups, organisations or individuals was right or wrong, in the first place, because Marxism had not yet become the accepted philosophy of the International and its members; secondly, because Marxism itself was in the process of evolution. Its theoretical basis was now more or less completely laid by the *Manifesto* of 1848, the *Capital* of 1867 and the experience of the Commune of 1871. The third reason was that there were, as yet, no big political parties of the working class, challenging bourgeois rule in various States of Europe and America. But such parties did develop in the next period and called for the building of the Second International.

Thirteen years passed between the end of the First International and founding of the Second.

Writing to Sorge in 1874, about the virtual end of the First International, Engels observed :

"...any further effort to galvanise it into new life would be folly and waste of energy. For ten years, the International dominated one side of European history—the side on which the future lies—and can look back upon its work with pride. But in its old form it has outlived itself....I think the next International—after Marx's writings have had some years of influence—will be directly Communist and will openly proclaim our principles."

20. Thus continued the historic journey of the working class towards perfecting its own philosophy of the revolutionary transformation of society from capitalism, the last stage of class-society, to socialism, the first stage of class-less society and Communism, and towards finding suitable forms of action and organisation, on a national and international scale to achieve its aims.

The Communist League had come and gone and left behind it the *Manifesto* and the great churnings of 1848 revolutions. The First International had come and gone and left behind it new lessons learned from the Paris Commune and the *Capital* of Marx unravelling the laws of capitalist society and laying the foundations of the science of Marxism. The

working-class of Europe had now clearer perspectives of its future.

Thereafter new political parties were born with adherence to socialism and the ideology of Marxism. These parties embraced vast masses of workers and their trade unions. The rapid expansion and development of capitalism, careering throughout the world in search of markets, profits and colonies enabled it to allow the working-class parties many rights and freedoms compatible with bourgeois democracy, based on bourgeois state power. To coordinate all this, once again the need for an International was felt. This historical necessity was fulfilled by foundation the Second International.

IV

21 The invitation to the founding Congress was signed by the representatives of sixteen countries and was attended by 467 delegates from twenty countries. In contrast to the relatively limited groupings of the sections of the First International, the Social Democratic Parties of the Second International comprised an aggregate membership of some four millions, with an aggregate parliamentary vote of twelve millions.

The Second International established the May Day as an international day of solidarity of the working class and initiated battles for the eight-hour working day and democratic and trade union rights.

The membership of the Second International was open to both *trade unions* and *political parties*. This mixed character affected its ideology and adherence to the revolutionary content of Marxism and provided grounds for new differences and schisms.

The Anarchists of Bakunin with the petty bourgeois concept of communism denied the necessity of political action, of parliamentary form of struggle and the necessity of capturing state power at all. So when the resolution for political action was passed at the Zurich Congress of 1893, the Anarchists left the Congress. They were finally "excluded" from the International in 1896. Thus the Second International enforced its political line by expelling the Anarchists. This was a confident assertion of the organisational authority of the International to establish its ideological supremacy.

But there was also the danger of reformism and revisionism, which soon turned into the main battle for theory, policy and tactics of the Second International.

22. Under the plea that parliamentary democracy had made revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois state and replacing it by the proletarian state unnecessary, revisionism started revising the basic concepts of Marxism on the nature of capitalism, the class-struggle and the State. Capitalism was presented as becoming democratic and gradually transforming itself in such a way as to be capable of passing over painlessly into socialism and later the development of capitalism into Imperialism was expected to develop into a supra-national world state, which would do away with competition and wars and usher in the era of peace and socialism.

The corruption of the ideology of Marxism was

soon seen in the practice of Socialists joining bourgeois governments in the service of the bourgeoisie and taking part in the suppression of the working class.

The battle against revisionism was fought theoretically and the Congress of the International condemned the theory of revisionism, and upheld Marxism. But the revisionists were not "excluded" from the International like the Anarchists in the name of preserving "party unity". The result was that revisionism in practice ruled the International and the conduct of its affiliated parties. It was only in the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, that Lenin in consistency with the rejection of the theory of revisionism, broke with the Mensheviks and built up the Bolshevik Party. But it is worth noting that it remained within the framework of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, affiliated to the Second International. The Bolsheviks did not break with RSDLP formally till the Mensheviks went over to the Counter-Revolution.

23. Did the Second International try to impose ideological and organisational discipline on its affiliated parties? The Amsterdam Congress of 1904 adopted a resolution that there should be only one socialist party in each country. On this basis, its Central Bureau proposed to set up an arbitration commission to resolve the differences and overcome the division between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. But Lenin rejected the proposal saying that the issue of principles could be settled only by a Party Congress and not by arbitration. That was the only time they tried to intervene in the affairs of an affiliated party.

The Second International had failed to evolve a revolutionary loyalty and party structure suitable to revolutionary action among its affiliated parties. A long span of parliamentarism and the corruption of the leadership by the comparatively peaceful and prosperous development of capitalism had made it incapable of evolving that way.

Its Central Bureau was nothing but a "Post Office". It had not even that directing centre, which Marx had provided for the First International. Neither democratic centralism nor discipline was enforced by it. So, as soon as the world situation headed towards a world war, the adherence of the International to principles of proletarian internationalism, to revolutionary class-struggle against the ruling bourgeoisie, which by now had turned imperialist and to all that Marxism signified, completely collapsed. The International betrayed its own resolution on war and thus was split between those, who while repudiating revisionism in theory, supported it in practice and those, who took to revolutionary action and refused to support the imperialist war. The only party which consistently stuck by this position was of the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin.

The Second International ceased to function during the World War of 1914-18, and each party followed its own bourgeoisie in asking for the defeat of the other. National chauvinism engulfed internationalism and the socialist revolution was betrayed.

V

24 The Socialist Parties of the Second International were confronted with a new problem which had not existed at the time of the First International and that was the *Colonial problem*.

Capitalism had now developed into imperialism. The major capitalist powers had become imperialist powers, who had occupied the vast areas of Asia and Africa. Britain, which had already conquered India at the beginning of the nineteenth century and had ousted France, Belgium, and Holland from their positions in Asia and elsewhere, was the greatest imperialist power.

German capitalism came late on the scene. Hence it decided to redistribute the markets and colonies and territories by recourse to war.

The Socialist Parties of the imperialist countries had to decide what their attitude was towards these colonies, which their bourgeoisie had conquered, and the war which was being launched to redivide them. So far as Marxism was concerned it had defined its attitude long ago in the celebrated letters of Marx on India. Marxism demanded the right of self-determination, right to independence for all the peoples of the colonies.

The colonial countries themselves were rising in revolt and conducting struggles for independence and freedom.

25. Some of the parties of the Second International wanted to revise the Marxist stand on this question also. They wanted to initiate a new "socialist colonial policy", in which a "socialist" country, instead of declaring independence for the colonial country, holds it in order to make it "civilised".

The British Labour Party which was one of the biggest affiliates of the Second International did not even accept Marxism, let alone revising it. The result was that the British Labour Party helped the imperialist rulers of its country to suppress the Independence movements in Ireland, India, China and elsewhere. British imperialism was the world gendarme in those days, as US imperialism is today. And in this the British Labour Party gave its full cooperation to its own bourgeoisie. We, in India, do not require to be told much about this, we know it as part of our national history and experience. What is not known is that the Second International after the World War, supported the colonial policy of imperialism in the name of its "civilising mission" for the so-called backward nations.

VI

26 But it is not directly on the colonial question that the Second (Socialist) International split. The main question that led to its collapse was the question of support to the *imperialist war* which broke out in 1914 and which had been well anticipated by the parties of the International years before. The First World War of 1914-1918 was launched by the imperialists to solve their inner contradictions

and crisis by redividing the world, the major part of which had been swallowed by the British imperialists. Nobody was in doubt about the aims of the war. The question before international socialism was: should a Communist (Socialist) support the bourgeoisie of his country in waging a war to redivide the world in the interests of the monopolies? Should the working class of a country support its monopoly bourgeoisie in solving its crisis through a war of aggression and annexation and for that purpose participate in the massacre of its classbrothers in another country, who too are exploited by the monopolists? Or, should the international solidarity of the working-class be brought into play to refuse to support the war of its international exploiters and call for the overthrow of their bourgeois governments? Should a Communist or Socialist support the so-called "national defence", which, in essence, in the conditions of imperialist monopoly power, is nothing but support to the perpetuations of the rule of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie? Such were the main questions before the International.

27. The Socialist International had discussed this question in 1908 and in 1912. It had adopted a resolution opposing the war whose signs were already visible on the horizon. It had clearly called on the workers not only to refuse to support the war, but also to take to the revolutionary path of the overthrow of their bourgeoisie as the Paris Commune had done. But when the war actually broke out the major parties of the International, that is the British, the German and the French, supported their bourgeoisie and each one called on its working-class to defeat the bourgeoisie of the other. How was this contradiction among the parties of the International to be resolved? What authority, moral, political or organisational, could the International exercise over the member parties? The Socialist International was never built that way and hence it failed to adhere to the fulfilment of its most important resolution on international policy and ideology.

The question of the attitude of Communists (or Socialists who adhere to Marxism as in the Second International days) to war has always been of great importance in Party history. The war of 1870 which drew Marx's attention, the World War of 1914-18, the Second World War of 1939-45, the liberation wars of China, Algeria, Spain etc. and the more recent India-China conflict of 1962 have all been subject matter of serious discussions, differences and controversies in the Communist movement. Communists have always supported the liberation wars waged by colonial or semi-colonial countries, Communists always make a distinction between a just war and unjust war. But there have been times, when, the nature of war could not be decided so easily. For example, the Second World War began as an imperialist war but when the Nazis attacked the Soviet Union, it changed its character, and here too there was a doubt whether an element of its anti-Fascist character was not there even at the beginning of the War.

28. The Indian Communist Party was sharply divided on this issue and so were many other parties. Our Party was also divided on the question whether our national liberation struggle should be pushed to its revolutionary conclusion against the British imperialists in 1942, in view of their temporary alliance with the Soviet Union and the anti-fascist democratic compulsions of the world situation, whether that would not mean being guided only by the needs of the national situation.

Our Party was also sharply divided on the India-China conflict of 1962 and our splitters in fact intensified their role since that time.

So also was the French affected in its tactical consideration at a certain stage in the Algerian liberation war against the French colonialists.

Though it is necessary to argue on this subject again, as we once did in 1962, it is not our purpose to do so now. The main question before us in this essay is: when a Party is sharply divided on this most serious issue of war, which is nothing but the sharpest form of class-struggle and a serious manifestation of the crisis and contradictions in the ruling classes, through what *organisational forms* does the Party solve its differences? And when the Party splits on the issue, who is to decide who is right and who is wrong and which of the parties are correct in their behaviour?

29. Those, who are now splitters in the international communist movement, including those who split the Indian Party, hold the view and propagate that when the Second International abandoned the true Marxist position on the question of war in 1914-18 and when the majority of the International turned revisionists, Lenin and the Bolsheviks walked out of the International; they split it and called for the establishment of the Third International. And history shows that the "revolutionary minority" of Lenin was right and the majority of the old revisionist leadership was wrong. That the Bolsheviks and those who thought like them (Roza Luxembourg, Liebknecht, Connolly) proved right does not change the fact that it was splittism. If it was justifiable then, why is it not now? Thus argue our splitters.

Quoting this precedent in a distorted way, they argue that in today's conditions also, when the majority of the parties, in the international Communist movement, led by the CPSU in particular, have become revisionist and have taken the position on the question of war and peace, the class-struggle and anti-imperialism, which according to them are revisionist positions, they, the true Marxists, following example of Lenin, are right in splitting from the world Communist movement and splitting every Party, which does not agree with them and where the majority, therefore, has turned revisionist.

At the time of 1914, there was an organisation, the International, to split. Now there is no such formally organised and recognised central organisation as such. But there is a world platform of 81 Parties, there are Parties who uphold it and who still consider the CPSU as the vanguard of the world Communist movement.

(Continued on Page 38)

CSIR : Task Before Sarkar Committee

P. K. NAIDU

THE distressing stagnation and crippling bureaucracy in the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research should find a healthy solution through the probe of the parliamentary enquiry committee appointed recently by the Government. Headed by Mr A. K. Sarkar, retired Chief Justice of India, it is a committee of relatively young people who were never involved in the affairs of the CSIR. Public is, therefore hopeful that the Sarkar Committee, unlike some of the "staged" committees of the CSIR in the recent times, will take an objective view of the whole question of CSIR's working and suggest necessary reform. It is, however, surprising that even after the appointment of the Sarkar Committee, the CSIR is trying to achieve a *fait accompli* through other committees and Expert Groups.

That many things are awfully bad in the CSIR, "came to light" after Dr Atma Ram took over as its Director-General in August 1966. Press handouts were issued to this effect (*See Mainstream* October 28, 1967) incorporating cooked up figures, disgracing the organisation and the earlier regimes. These were widely contested at the meetings of the Governing Body of the CSIR and the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet.

The CSIR alleged that 65-85 per cent of its funds were consumed in salaries, leaving precious little for research. However, the Annual Reports for recent years published by the CSIR show that pay and allowances constitute hardly 35 per cent of total annual budget of about Rs 16 crores. Subsequently, the CSIR Secretariat prepared a long list of employees (740) in scientific and technical posts without having

scientific qualifications. This was placed before the Bhagawantam Committee to examine the apparent atrocious nepotism. The Bhagawantam Committee, it is understood, refused to handle the bulky "black list", since over 90 per cent on the list belonged to the categories of mechanics, mistrys, carpenters, electricians, malis and the like who are not expected to have a university degree in science or technology. But the mischief is done. People are talking about the list which apparently speaks of nepotism of Pre-Atma Ram regime in appointing hundreds of non-qualified people in scientific and technical positions.

A planned public denouncement is not an humble self-criticism. And, when accusations are publicised with false or misleading statements, a drastically deep therapy is called for. The terms of reference of the Sarkar Committee, as given below, are wide enough to perform this task. It will not only scrutinise the present personnel policies and the policies governing payment of royalties, but also review the overall functioning of the CSIR and suggest improvements.

Terms of Reference of the Sarkar Committee

(i) To review the personnel policies followed at various levels with reference to the Rules and Regulations in force and, in particular, to look into the allegations of the irregularities brought to the notice of Parliament from time to time and to suggest any remedial measures necessary;

(ii) To enquire into the adequacy or otherwise of the existing policies in respect of payment of royalty, having regard to the following object prescribed in the

Memorandum of Association of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research:

"The utilization of the results of the researches conducted under the auspices of the Council towards development of industries in the country and the payment of a share of royalties arising out of the development of the results of researches to those who are considered to having contributed to the pursuit of such researches."

(iii) To review the overall functioning of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and to suggest ways and means of improvement.

The first two items are hardly worth probing into by the high-powered committee. These are apparently the internal routine matter for which procedures and conventions exist. A high-powered body like the Sarkar Committee has, however, become necessary because internal reviews are likely to take the shape of witch-hunting and misrepresentation of cases. The CSIR establishment has recently been found over-anxious to prove irregularities in some cases, but not in all cases with similar background.

The appointments and promotions of some of the high-ups may throw light on the methods of the administration. For instance, the appointment of a non-technical director for the scientific documentation organization (INSDOC) is a case in point. Apart from the procedural question, more interesting is the fact that the CSIR administration has sheltered him by excluding his name from the list of high-placed persons having no scientific qualification. Procedural questions can be raised

in the appointments and promotions of the present Director-General, the Director of Scientific Instruments Organization, and a few others.

While the Sarkar Committee may examine the broad policies relating to these points, its chief concern would be the third item, the overall functioning and reform of the CSIR.

The CSIR headquarters in Delhi is responsible for providing leadership and formulating overall policies for its 40 or so National Laboratories, Institutes and other establishments. The work of the CSIR is to promote research and development for industry, agriculture, health, and other economic activities which are based on technology. As such, the decision-making is not a matter of routine administration, but an act of sound understanding of the technical problems, which alone can lead to sound decisions.

To aid the process of technological studies, four technical directorates were established two years ago by upgrading the existing units. These directorates built up expertise on scientific and technical manpower of the country, industrial liaison and licensing, engineering design work on patents and processes, and survey of Indian research. While these directorates were mapping the Indian scenes of science and technology, Dr Atma Ram publicly denounced them as unnecessary frills. For the last two years the major efforts of the CSIR headquarters were devoted to dismantling and dismembering these directorates which, by modern concept of research management, are the most, potent tools in decision-making.

The Sarkar Committee, in considering proposals for reforms in the CSIR may find it extremely rewarding to go into the spirit and procedure of the creation and abolition of these technical directorates, and the present system of bureaucratic administration.

If the CSIR were genuinely perturbed over un-balanced expenditure, faulty staffing, lack of purposeful research programming, and evaluation of pilot plants,

etc., the Director-General could have entrusted such studies to the technical directorates which are meant for such work. Instead, preferred to rely on the files and notes produced by the administrative staff, and flash the half-baked data and ill-conceived conclusions for the consumption of the press, Parliament and committees.

The recent two years of the CSIR is a history of disruption and administrative despotism. The directors of the national laboratories have been treated shabbily as mere subordinates and have no free communication with the Director-General. Though, avowedly, all the directors are equal in the eyes of the Director-General, some are more equal than others. Police investigations have been instituted against some of the directors of laboratories. Plans have been afoot to throw out two of the best directors of international repute on flimsiest of pretexts.

Large scale transfers and other harassment to staff are continuing even after the Finance Ministry issued a circular (August 1967) to suspend all routine transfers as an economic measure. The CSIR is simply not bothered about the unnecessary expenditure on large scale routine transfers or the personal hardships of the staff, and the dislocation of their children's education. There is no "compassionate ground" in the dictionary of the CSIR. A Section Officer, on his death-bed in a Delhi nursing home, was pestered with volleys of orders to get out to Lucknow on transfer. No amount of medical certificates or begging for withdrawal of the transfer order helped him, until he died in the nursing home.

The witch-hunting appears to be the chief occupation of the CSIR headquarters nowadays. Files are being prepared, often with the help of the Law Officer, of find flaws in certain cases of appointments and promotions. The Law Officer, who is a permanent employee of the CSIR, has been appointed to deal with legal cases

brought against the CSIR. But he is being utilised for various administrative manoeuvres, it is understood. It is time for him to retire; but efforts are being made to retain him, and perhaps on a higher scale of pay. Although there is a big row over payment of scientists' consultancy fees the Law Officer is permitted to earn fees for outside legal consultations.

Prostitution of Science

Facts are often stranger than fiction. The idea of merging the Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDOC) and the Publication and Information Directorate (PID) was mooted earlier. On the advice of experts consulted by Mr Chagla, the then Education Minister and Vice-President of the CSIR, it was clearly decided that INSDOC and PID should not be merged since their functions were quite different. Efforts are, however, continuing to amalgamate the heterogeneous organisations under one Director. It would mean a bigger empire for some one. Having gained a step in this direction through the Nihar Ranjan Ray Committee last year, it is found that the bigger empire is still not big enough.

There is, therefore, a move to bring all technical units and divisions under a Central Institute of Scientific Information and Publication (CISIP), an organization to be set up in the CSIR. It would appear that the CSIR believes that technical assessment and research on Indian scientific activities, manpower, R & D problems identification, industrial liaison, are nothing but information counters, since they operate through the collection of data. The CSIR apparently believes that such technical activities and researches can be planned by one who is eminent in ancient history and culture, and directed by a librarian. Is it that prostitution of science is a prerogative of the CSIR headquarters?

The Sarkar Committee will have a substantial work to do. Let our scientists give it full support to save Indian Science from disaster.

Whither Nagaland ?—VI

PANNALAL DAS GUPTA

ANTI-INDIANISM, though it was useful to a certain extent to provide the outer form of Naga nationalism, is today proving inadequate. The die-hard section of the rebels, even if they take help from the Chinese to stick to their secessionist goal, may not find it possible to retain their nationalism with that help. It may be contended that for all the help they received from China and the Soviet Union, neither the North Vietnamese nor the Viet Cong surrendered their national individuality, identity or freedom. The fact is that in spite of their nationalism, the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong are no less Communists than their Soviet or Chinese allies.

Without that unqualified commitment to a greater ideal surpassing nationalism, the small groups of rebel Nagas belonging to so many small tribes, even if they have so far retained their individuality, will be lost in the ocean of Chinese Communism when they come in closer contact with the Chinese or seek their help.

On the other hand, if they are able to retain their identity, the inner content of that identity will cease to be tribal. It will have to be some form of Communism. In other words, a sudden jump from the narrow confines of Naga nationalism to the world of Communism will not be an easy one and the Nagas will have to go through many intermediate stages between tribalism and Communism and confront many political problems. All this will create a favourable cli-

mate for lively political discussion in Nagaland and North-East India.

The nationalism that the Nagas have created while advancing along the path of rebellion, has a moral appeal to the non-Nagas. Those who formerly did not call themselves Nagas, now spontaneously do so. The rebels of Ukhul and Tamenglong now want to join hands and cast their lots with the Nagas.

There is a body of opinion which thinks that just as a Naga leadership is growing in North-East India which is drawing all the tribal communities in its fold, there is a possibility that the Mizo rebels may influence the sub-tribes belonging to the Chin group and make them pro-Mizo. The Kuki, Hmar, Paite and such other tribes are waking up and becoming self-conscious, but they are still groping for directions to express their respective individualities. The Naga National Council and the Mizo National Front served the model for other tribes to set up Paite National Council, Hmar National Union, Kuki National Assembly etc. each of which demand a separate self-governing unit for the tribe concerned. If all the countless tribes and sub-tribes begin to raise the same demand for separate units, what will their future be?

Some enlightened young men from these tribes are now pondering whether they can find a bigger identity for themselves if they merge their separate identities into the Chin nation. In other words, there is a dual process in the integration of the hill tribes: some of them are seeking to achieve unity under Naga leadership while some others—Hmar, Paite, Baite, Mate, Chiru,

Angte, Lamang, Kipjen, Sinsong, Kuki etc.—may rally behind the rebel Mizos and Mizoram may emerge as a growing nationalist force.

It is, however, doubtful if ethnic affinity or tribal consanguinity will be adequate to give form and content to the hitherto inarticulate tribal emotions and aspirations, because many other forces and factors—Socialism, Communism, Indian nationalism, inner democracy, Christianity, economic problems—have been brought into play.

It is interesting to note that the Manipuris or Meiteis who, of all the tribal peoples of north-east India, were most Indianized, are having second thoughts on the effect of the impact of Indian civilization upon them. The Meiteis accepted Vaishnavism and they are perhaps more Vaishnavite than most Vaishnavites in India. But now a section of young Meiteis are questioning whether the original accepting of Indian civilization was a right thing. The extremists among them are reportedly trying to make contact with the rebel Nagas and Mizos.

If Christianity could not prevent the Nagas from turning to Chinese Communism, there is little reason to feel compacent that Vaishnavism will be an insuperable barrier between the young Meiteis and Chinese communism.

Taking a bird's eye view of North-East India—the hills as well as the plains—one finds so many and so varied political currents and cross-currents that the whole area may be considered to have become a veritable political laboratory.

(To Be Concluded Next Week)

The previous instalments of this report appeared in Mainstream, June 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, 1968.



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Inside Communist Party of China

M. ALTAISKY

DURING the late 1950s the leadership of the Communist Party of China openly advanced its special course of foreign and domestic policy that signified a retreat from Marxism-Leninism.

This course seriously contradicts the principles of proletarian internationalism, the main laws of the building of socialist society. "The Mao Tse-tung group began to promote a line that is a blend of petty-bourgeois-adventurism and great-power chauvinism covered up with 'Leftist' phraseology," it is noted in the Theses for the 50th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Soviet Union, "and openly embarked on the road of undermining the unity of the socialist community and splitting the world Communist movement. The adventuristic course of Mao Tse-tung's group brought about a sharp weakening of the positions of the Communist Party, the Chinese working class and to a rampage of petty-bourgeois and anarchistic elements. A serious threat has developed for the socialist gains in China."

Quite naturally, the processes taking place in the Communist Party of China cannot but cause concern among Soviet Communists, of all genuine friends of the Chinese people. The point at issue is the very life of the Communist Party which succeeded despite tremendous difficulties and trials to lead the Chinese people first to victory in the bourgeois-democratic revolution and then raise the multi-million masses to the socialist revolution and the building of socialism.

Sharp Struggle Inside

Trying to impose their anti-Marxist, adventuristic course on the Chinese people, Mao Tse-tung and his group, as it is now becoming increasingly more evident, have long tried to turn the Communist Party of China into an instrument of promoting this course. With this aim in view Mao Tse-tung and his followers for a number of years undermined and destroyed both the ideological-theoretical and organisational mainstays of the Communist Party of China, driving genuine Communists out of its ranks. Rude-ly flouting the Party Rules and the Decisions of the

Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) held in 1956, distorting the principles of party development, they weakened the Party's organism from inside, undermined the Party and belittled its role and importance. Inside the CPC a sharp struggle has been going on for a number of years between proletarian, internationalist forces and petty bourgeois-nationalist forces represented by Mao Tse-tung's group over problems of ideological-theoretical and organisational development of the Party.

For long years, the Mao Tse-tung group violated and flouted in every way within the CPC the cardinal principle of organisation of a Marxist-Leninist Party of the working class—the principle of democratic centralism. Only two CPC Congresses were held from 1935, that is, from the time of the "establishment of Mao Tse-tung's leadership" in the Party: the Seventh Congress in 1945 and Eighth Congress in 1956. (It is important to mention in this connection that in the period from 1921 to 1935, when the Party was in extremely difficult conditions, Congresses and plenary meetings of the CPC Central Committee were held on the whole regularly. Six Party Congresses were held during that period in compliance with the Party Rules). It was stipulated by the Rules of the CPC adopted at the Eighth Congress (1956) that the CPC Central Committee would be under the control of the Party Congress to be permanently convened for a term of five years and to assemble for annual sessions. The Eighth Congress however held only one session in 1958.

In provincial party organisations the term of office of provincial Congresses was set at three years with one or two sessions a year. In the eleven years since 1956 in most provinces only two or three sessions were held, party committees did not report on their activities and no new elections were held.

Crushing Party Bodies

The CPC Central Committee met rather regularly in the first years after the Eighth Congress: eight plenary meetings were held. The situation changed, however, after 1959. The ninth Plenary Meeting of the CPC Central Committee was convened in January 1961, that is, 17 months after the eighth; and the tenth in September 1962, that is, 19 months after the ninth. The term of office of the CPC Central Committee elected by the Eighth Party Congress

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expired in 1961. It was only four years after the tenth Plenary Meeting (September 1962) that Mao Tse-tung's group convened in August 1966 the eleventh Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee, an invalid one at that. More than half of the members and alternate members of the CPC Central Committee elected by the Eighth Congress in 1956 did not attend this Plenary meeting. Their place was taken by representatives of the para-military detachments of Hungweipings (Red Guards) created by Mao Tse-tung—anarchistic groups of youngsters corrupted by chauvinistic propaganda. At this so called "plenary meeting" Mao Tse-tung openly called on the hungweipings and the army to crush Party organisations and the Party as a whole.

The fact that Mao Tse-tung's group avoided publicity in Party activities was a major obstacle hindering both the democratisation of Party life and the strengthening of the Party's close ties with the masses, the upbringing of working people in the spirit of the proletarian ideology of Marxism-Leninism. In the course of the past decade hardly anything was reported in the CPC Party press about the work of Party organisations while decisions of Plenary meetings of the CPC Central Committee, as a rule, were not made public. Only short communiqués were published about the few Plenary meetings of the CPC Central Committee held after 1959. Criticism and self-criticism are actually prohibited in the Party. To be more exact, there is criticism from above and the obligation for Party members who fall in disfavour with Maoists to engage in self-castigation under the guise of self-criticism.

Quite naturally this situation created very favourable conditions for arbitrariness and the adoption of one-man decisions on major questions of the domestic and foreign policy of the Party and the state.

The so-called movement for the regulation of the style of work swept the Party with one campaign after another. After every such "regulation" the style of guidance became more and more rigid and the opportunities for arbitrariness greater and greater. These campaigns offered Mao Tse-tung and his followers an opportunity to use "class struggle" and the "overcoming of harmful style" as a pretext in doing away with all those who upheld Marxism-Leninism and came out in defence of Leninist norms of party life.

Military-administrative and do-what-you're-told methods of leadership were increasingly implanted in the Party. Contrary to CPC Party Rules, Secretaries of Party Committees at all levels were increasingly appointed from above instead of being elected. Party organisations and their Committees were being compared to military detachments. As is known, Mao-Tse-tung even advanced the slogan "First Secretary of a Party Committee is a squad commander." Of course, the militarisation of Party life could not but evoke the opposition of Communists. It was then that Mao Tse-tung and his group decided to place the Party under the control of the army, to implant military discipline in it and even army forms of activities of primary Party organisations. In 1964 Mao Tse-tung advanced the thesis

"The entire country learns from the army. The entire people are soldiers." Political departments (modelled after those in the army) sprouted throughout the country parallel to elective Party Committees and took over some of the functions of Party Committees.

The introduction of specific army methods into Party life created conditions for the suppression of any criticism and for the flourishing of administration by mere injunction.

No Party Programme

Till this day the CPC does not have a clear-cut and comprehensive party programme. This situation is also being used by Mao Tse-tung in his struggle against the CPC.

Using "leftist" phraseology as a cover, Mao Tse-tung's group has long tried to replace Marxism-Leninism, the Party's ideological and theoretical basis, with Maoism. As long ago as 1938, in his report to the Sixth Plenary meeting of the CPC Central Committee Mao Tse-tung openly advanced for the first time the anti-Leninist thesis about the Signification of Marxism-Leninism and orientated the Party to ignore international revolutionary experience, to overemphasise and exaggerate the specific aspects of the Chinese revolution and first of all guerilla warfare, and to absolutise methods of violence in political struggle. After a vicious purge of the Party by Kan Shen and a lengthy weeding of Congress delegates who were elected way back in 1939-1940, the Seventh CPC Congress introduced in 1945 into the Party Rules the anti-Marxist thesis that "the thoughts of Mao Tse-tung are the guiding ideology of the CPC." The Congress documents thus put on record Mao's personality cult and sanctioned the line at replacing Marxism-Leninism with the notorious "Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung." These ideas began to be referred to as "Chinese communism" and the "universal truth for the peoples of colonies and semi-colonies."

But the victory of the Chinese revolution in which Chinese Communists displayed mass heroism and selflessness, confronted the Chinese people and members of the Party with the task of choosing the road to the country's further development. And they resolutely chose the road of the October Revolution, the road of the Soviet Union, the road of the building of socialism.

For some time after the forming of the People's Republic of China, Mao Tse-tung and his group could not help drawing on the experience of the Soviet Union and world socialism in general. But whereas most Communists and conscious workers saw in this the key to China's socialist transformation, to its development into an advanced industrial-agrarian socialist power, Mao and his followers, as it has now become quite evident, proceeded primarily from their narrow nationalistic and selfish considerations. They planned to use the tremendous progress achieved in the course of successful socialist construction and the tremendous aid given by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries to attain their great-power chauvinistic and hegemonistic aims.

The influence of the working class in China's

political life increased and the position of internationalistic forces within the CPC strengthened considerably in the years of the rehabilitation of the national economy and the first Five Year Plan, in the years of China's friendship with the USSR and the other Socialist countries. This is proved by the work and decisions of the Eighth Party Congress that has gone down in the CPC's history as the Congress that has outlined concrete plans of turning China into a socialist power with a modern industry, agriculture, defence and culture.

Eighth Congress Rule

The Rules adopted by the Eighth CPC Congress omitted the thesis about the "guiding role of Mao Tse-tung's Thoughts" imposed on the Seventh Congress, and included the following thesis: "In its activities the Communist Party of China proceeds from Marxism-Leninism." The Congress stressed in the "Basic thesis of the program," which became the introductory part of the CPC Rules, that the CPC "is the vanguard detachment of the working class, the supreme form of the class organisation of the Chinese working class. Its aim is the building of Socialism and Communism in China." The great importance of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of Soviet Union, held several months earlier, was noted at the Eighth CPC Congress (1956).

Signs testifying to an intention to review the decisions of the Eighth Congress became evident already in 1957. The propaganda of "Mao Tse-tung's Thought" was gradually resumed with new force. In 1958 the substitution of Marxism-Leninism with the notorious "Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung" again began to assume an open nature. The anti-Party activities of Mao Tse-tung and his group were made easier by the unprecedented personality cult of Mao Tse-tung that was flourishing in the country. All means of propaganda were used to bring up Party members and the entire population of the country in a spirit of fanatical faith in Mao Tse-tung, in a spirit of nationalism and hegemonism. Mao Tse-tung's personality cult was being implanted in the CPC and the country with mounting intensity. He was being portrayed as an infallible leader, the wisest of all, the sponsor of all decisions made by the Party, and all the victories in the revolution, in the building up of a new life achieved by the selfless labour of millions of Chinese workers, peasants, intellectuals, Communists and non-party members were ascribed to him. Simultaneously with this, various anti-Soviet views began to be circulated at first in the veiled form of struggle against "trust in foreign things," and then increasingly more openly.

Party organisations were ordered to see that the Communists learn by heart quotations from Mao Tse-tung's works. The army was given the task of brainwashing the Party and the entire population in the spirit of "Mao Tse-tung's Thoughts." At an expanded meeting of the Military Committee of the CPC Central Committee, Lin Piao advanced the thesis that "Mao Tse-tung's Thoughts" are allegedly "the greatest and the most vital Marxism-Leninism of the present epoch."

The fourth volume of "The Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung" was published with a lot of fanfare and the very same Lin Piao called it "a spiritual atom bomb." The printing of Mao's articles and collections assumed fantastic size while the publication and dissemination of works by classics of Marxism-Leninism was at first scaled down and then completely stopped in the course of the ill-famed "Cultural Revolution". By 1960-1962 the total printing of Mao's works exceeded 360 million copies. In several months of 1960 alone the fourth volume of "The Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung" was printed in over nine million copies whereas the entire printing of works by Marx, Engels and Lenin throughout the existence of the People's Republic of China, hardly exceeded ten million copies. Collections of Lenin's works were released in not more than 50-60 thousand copies. At present Chinese printing plants publish nearly exclusively Mao's articles. In 1967 alone Mao's "Quotations" was printed in more than 350 million copies while "Selected Works" and collections of Mao's principal articles were released in nearly 132 million copies. "The Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung" have been proclaimed a cure-all, a "telescope and microscope in any undertaking."

In their struggle against the Party's healthy forces Mao Tse-tung and his group use the fanatic mob of politically immature youngsters and the illiteracy of the broad masses of the Chinese people. Mention should be made of the fact that even today over 60 per cent of the peasant population (it amounts to over 600 million) is illiterate, while the illiteracy rate among workers runs as high as 40 per cent. It is apt to recall Karl Marx's warning that ignorance is a demoniac force and it should well be feared that it will yet cause many tragedies.

Healthy Forces Struggle

The healthy forces in the CPC found themselves in extremely difficult conditions and this was another important cause leading to the situation in which the Communist Party of China has now found itself. As a result, these forces did not bring to the end the struggle against the anti-Marxist deviation in the Party, could not prevent the preponderance of petty bourgeois ideology, could not achieve the assertion in the CPC of the Leninist principles of Party democracy and the principles of democratic centralism. The healthy forces in the CPC did not succeed in stopping the process of the substitution of Marxism-Leninism by the "Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung." Communists who had criticised in this or that from the activities of Mao's group have been accused of "betrayal" and "disloyalty" and fallen victims of the "Cultural Revolution", becoming targets for mockery by "the defenders of Mao", the hungweipings.

Yet another explanation of the present situation obtaining in the CPC is that the healthy, proletarian forces of the Party which have been tempered in the crucible of the revolution have to struggle for the Party's Marxist-Leninist line in conditions when a considerable part of its members, accepted immediately after the establishment of the People's Republic of China, did not have the time to

become re-educated in the spirit of proletarian ideology, to overcome the strong influence of petty-bourgeois, conventional ideology and habits that were deftly used by Mao Tse-tung's group for its own purposes, to fan nationalistic sentiments and to implant Mao's personality cult.

It should be noted that in itself the certain numerical preponderance in the Party of members with a petty-bourgeois background can well be understood, considering, firstly, the peculiarities of China where peasants, artisans and craftsmen comprise the absolute majority of the population; and, secondly, the peculiarities of the CPC's historic development. The Communist Party of China formed in a period when the class movement of workers and peasants in the country was still in its embryo state. The CPC's nucleus was formed by petty-bourgeois elements which played at first a big role in the national liberation movement. The November (1927) Plenary meeting of the CPC Central Committee indicated this peculiarity in the Party's establishment. There was a time when Mao himself spoke about the petty-bourgeois nature of the Party's social composition. He had even voiced fears that "the party's degeneration is possible" if the Petty-bourgeois segments are not re-educated in the spirit of proletarian ideology and if their close alliance with the working class is not ensured, with the latter retaining the guiding role. The then CPC leadership officially admitted that these facts presented a serious danger also because the general ideological-theoretical and cultural level of Party members was extremely low.

Comintern Warnings

These peculiarities in the CPC's development placed before its leadership the extremely important task of strictly promoting a proletarian line in questions of party development. In December 1926 the Seventh Plenary meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International noted, analysing the situation in China, "The fact that the Chinese proletariat is still young and small in number must be recompensed by strength of organisation and clarity of ideology."

But the leadership of the CPC—especially after 1935 when the key positions in the CPC Central Committee were captured by Mao Tse-tung and his followers—began increasingly to belittle the guiding role of the working class in the revolution and to ignore the class approach to the growth of the Party ranks. The CPC leadership did not take sufficient measures to organise the struggle of the working class, did not pay sufficient attention to the strengthening of the Party by drawing industrial workers into its ranks. The tactical slogan about the temporary transfer of the centre of the Party's activities from the towns into the countryside, advanced after the defeat of the bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1927, began to be viewed by a part of the CPC leadership as a long-term basis for the Party's activities. In this connection it was pointed out at the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern in 1935 that the CPC leadership was giving insufficient attention to the organisation

of the struggle in the working class. Wilhelm Pieck, a prominent leader of the international Communist movement, said in his report: ".....The Chinese Party has not yet won over the majority of working people in Kuomintang China. It has not yet succeeded in organising the proletarians of advanced industrial centers."

A further departure from the proletarian class line in the field of Party development took place after the proclamation of the policy of united national front. Even various nationalistic elements, very remote from Marxism and socialism, were accepted into the party. This circumstance extremely alarmed the Comintern which sent a special letter about this to the CPC Central Committee in 1938. Mao Tse-tung and his followers actually rejected the Comintern's correct advice.

It cannot be said that the line at undermining the CPC's guiding role as the vanguard of the working class, at turning the party into an instrument of one-man dictatorship, at replacing Marxism-Leninism by the petty-bourgeois, subjectivist "Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung" did not encounter any opposition. Some Communists did not want to learn Mao's quotations by heart. In opposition to Lin Piao's thesis some CPC leaders called in their public statements "to be true disciples of Marx, Engels, Lenin", "to read more works of Lenin and Soviet literature on social sciences." Even some of the Party's ideological leaders called the campaign to spread "the Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung" a vulgarisation of Marxism.

Some party leaders saw the danger of the substitution of "the Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung" for Marxism-Leninism but put up only a weak, passive resistance to that line because they themselves did not firmly adhere to the Marxist teaching and attempted to combine the internationalist teaching of Marxism-Leninism with a nationalistic, chauvinistic ideology.

The subversive activities conducted by Mao Tse-tung's group for many years inflicted a tremendous damage to the cause of the working class, to the cause of Marxism-Leninism in China. In these years the internationalist, proletarian forces in the CPC were decimated, many Communists were deluded by the bombastic Leftist words and demagogy of the Maoists and even demoralised. The struggle by the healthy forces of the Communist Party of China and the Chinese working people against the anti-popular, chauvinistic and adventuristic line of Mao Tse-tung's group is passing through extremely difficult conditions.

It can now be firmly stated that the communist Party of China has been paralysed. Party organisations have not been functioning for two years now. Provincial, city, district and local Party committees have been disbanded and their rights and powers usurped by various unlawful bodies like the "Cultural Revolution Groups" "Military-Control Committees" and "Revolutionary Committees" set up by Mao Tse-tung's group in the course of the "Cultural Revolution".

There are actually no supreme elective bodies

of the Party in existence. The leadership of the Party has been captured by the "group for the affairs of the Cultural Revolution" set up in violation of the CPC Rules, and the Military Committee of the CPC Central Committee, called "Mao Tse-tung's Headquarters". Indeed, of the 174 members and alternate members of the CPC Central Committee elected by the Eighth Party Congress more than two-thirds have fallen victim to vicious houndings, discreditation and repression. Only a fifth of all members of the Political Bureau escaped the hounding and repressions. The entire Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee headed by General Secretary Teng Hsiao-Ping (with the exception of Kan Shen) was declared a "black gang" "counter-revolutionaries" and many of them fell victim to mob trials by hungweipings.

In charge of most important undertakings in the Party and in the country is Mao Tse-tung's wife Chiang Ching. Having no outstanding service to the revolution to her record and previously unknown to the Party, she nevertheless took the post of Secretary of the Permanent Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, that consists of members hand-picked by Mao Tse-tung. Addressing Peking's hungweipings and tsaofans on October 24 last year, the Chinese Minister of Public Security, Chairman of the Peking "Revolutionary Committee" Hsien Fu-chin stated: "At present the group for affairs of the Cultural Revolution of the CPC Central Committee is more important than the Secretariat and the Political Bureau. The bulk of the work of the Secretariat and the Political Bureau is accomplished by the group for the affairs of the Cultural Revolution".

Mao Has Not Won

But despite the terror and violence Mao Tse-tung has not achieved his main aims; he did not succeed in turning the Party, the trade unions and the Komsomol into an obedient tool for the establishment of his military-bureaucratic dictatorship in the country. There are many Communists in China who are aware of their responsibility to the Party and the people. These forces, naturally will struggle against the Party's degeneration, for bringing it back to the platform of Marxism-Leninism. The future belongs to these forces. As development continues more and more, the Chinese Communists, front-ranking workers, peasants and intellectuals will see from their own experience the anti-popular nature of the policy of Mao Tse-tung and his group, will understand that Mao Tse-tung's line is leading the party and the country into an impasse, that it is impossible to continue this line without breaking with socialism, without inflicting tremendous damage to the interests of the Chinese people themselves.

Mao Tse-tung and his group greatly fear the rallying of healthy forces in the Party and the country. This explains the manoeuvres that the Maoists were forced to undertake in the past several months. Mao Tse-tung is trying to whitewash himself in the

eyes of most Party and Government cadres who have fallen victims to repressions. He and his ilk now clamour about a "great unification", about the "rehabilitation" of old cadres. They are ready to put the blame for all their crimes against the Party and the Chinese people on the "small generals", the notorious "most loyal defenders of Mao"—the hungweipings and tsaofans. A rumour was circulated late last August that "the CPC activities should be resumed in 1968", that it is necessary to convene the Ninth CPC Congress and "to settle internal differences" at it. The foreign press reports that preparations for this congress are allegedly already under way and that delegates to the Congress will not be elected but appointed by Mao Tse-tung's group. Chiang Ching and Hsieh Fu-chin announced that hungweipings and tsaofans would also take part in the Congress after first being granted Party membership.

What the Mao Tse-tung group is now doing under the guise of regulating and reorganising the party is actually the setting up of a new party. The Maoists however are trying to employ the traditional prestige and strength of the CPC to set up under its shingle a mass political organisation that would serve as an instrument of the great-power policy of Mao Tse-tung's group. The Maoist press writes already now that as a result of the purge, or as they also term it, "the popular war", "the CPC, created anew with the help of Mao Tse-tung's Thoughts will stand in the East of the world." "Absolute loyalty to Mao Tse-tung, absolute loyalty to Mao Tse-tung's Thoughts and absolute loyalty to Mao Tse-tung's revolutionary line" such are the declared criteria of the partisanship of members of the "reorganised" CPC. Everybody who was a member of the CPC before the "cultural revolution" is now checked from the standpoint of these criteria that were advanced by Lin Biao.

It seems that these forced manoeuvres are being taken, on the one hand, to legalise and to formally approve everything done by Mao Tse-tung and his group on the road to the establishment of a military-bureaucratic dictatorship; and, on the other hand, to win time in order to regroup their own forces that have gone through quite a battering, have become demoralised and a part of which are beginning to waver on realising what sinister cause they are being made to serve.

In his report "Fifty Years of socialism's great Victories" Comrade L.I. Brezhnev noted that the events in China "have fully laid bare the ideological and political fall of some CPC leaders. At the same time they showed that in that country socialism has succeeded even within a short period of time and in most difficult conditions to strike root and to win over broad masses to its side..."

"The Chinese Communists, the Chinese people have that to defend, have that to struggle for. The general line of Chinese Communists is the line of building communism worked out by the Eighth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1966."

It is precisely these ideals that serve as a basis for the unification and mobilisation of all healthy forces in China loyal to the cause of socialism.

How to Improve Quality of Research

S. N. VARMA

OUR undue stress on the quantity of research is, to a large extent, responsible for deterioration in the quality of research.

It is unfortunate that in Universities when a person is to be appointed on a teaching post, generally members of the Selection Committee ask as to how many papers the candidate has published. Only a few care to find out as to what is published in those papers or where the papers have been published. Even the Abstracts appearing in the proceedings of the Indian Science Congress are given due credit; it does not matter whether the papers were actually read before the Science Congress or not. This also encourages the tendency of sending abstracts to the Indian Science Congress and keeping away at the time of reading of papers. But at the time of interview such a candidate is able to impress the members of the Selection Committee by enumerating the number of papers and abstracts that he has to his credit. On the other hand if another candidate has published only one or two papers making original scientific contribution in some standard journal, the members of the Selection Committee generally look down upon him and he is not selected. The net result is that we try to produce a number of mediocre papers or abstracts just to get appointed or promoted and do not lay emphasis on the quality of work.

What is true of the Universities, is also true for National Laboratories—rather the latter

present a more dismal picture as recently reported in the press that there are a number of Scientists in the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research who are not even graduates in Science. Unless the members of the Selection Committees and the appointing authorities give due importance and credit to the quality of work and are not led away by quantitative aspects, I am afraid the quality of research cannot improve and our nation cannot progress on right lines.

In advanced countries Science and Technology are progressing very fast for the simple reason that they give more credit to quality than to quantity of research. We are a developing nation and every one says we should progress but the way we are doing things is not the way to progress. Generally some people say that one should work for the sake of working and work in itself provides a satisfaction to the worker. This is true so far as the saying goes. But is it practicable? One comes across only a few workers who work for the sake of work only, without any desire for appreciation or reward. Mostly people do expect some reward for their sincere work. There are some who do not expect reward but at least they expect some appreciation of work. Only there might be a few exceptional workers who expect neither reward nor appreciation. But even they do not expect merit to be penalised. There are unfortunate instances in which meritorious persons have been pulled down or penalised. On the other hand there are numerous instances where wasters and idlers have been

appointed or promoted to senior positions. Is this the way in which the appointing authorities should behave in the interest of the country? Unless the employing authorities change their outlook, improvement in the quality of research would remain an idle man's dream.

Concept of Research

It is rather unfortunate that we have a poor concept of research. What we think to be research is not research at all. An example from Geology will make the point clear. Merely reporting an occurrence of a mineral or a rock here and there is taken to be piece of research and one gets the credit of a research paper if such an occurrence is published. I feel original contributions regarding the origin of rock types or discovering a new mineral should be taken as research.

A new hypothesis regarding the origin of rock types should be taken as an outstanding piece of research. The position becomes all the more unfortunate when some senior professors hold the view that merely reporting an occurrence of a mineral or a rock is research. Such a concept has also been responsible for deterioration in the quality of research in Geology and the workers prefer to get such occurrences published and stress on the quantitative value of research.

The position is better with respect to precise sciences like physics or mathematics where the concept of research is precisely defined. Thus in a science like Geology in order to improve matters, it is imperative that we

The author belongs to the Department of Geology, Banaras Hindu University.

properly define our concept of research and not leave it to the whims and fancies of some senior professors who may have attained the high office by dint of luck or because of important connections. Such senior professors create impediments in the way of persons working under them. They may not give full facilities of work if they wish but if they do not indulge in harassment, a better picture of research would come out and help towards improving quality of research.

Lack of Co-ordination

One finds absolute lack of co-ordination between universities, National Laboratories and Industry. Even there is no inter-departmental coordination in the same university. This often results in duplication of research which ultimately leads to loss of talent, time and money. We have paucity of financial resources and are a developing country. We cannot afford to waste talent, time and money which could be conveniently avoided if we have proper co-ordination and co-operation between the various units.

Moreover, such co-ordination will also improve the quality of research because the days of individual researches are over

and now-a-days good research comes out of team work. I feel there should be a free exchange of data and personnel between Universities, National Laboratories and Industry which will go a long way towards improving the quality of research. We should have confidence in ourselves and also confidence in others and should not be suspicious about each and every thing. Our suspicious outlook is detrimental towards raising the quality of research. This suspicion can go only if we work for a common cause in the interest of the nation and do away with our self-centred attitude. Nothing is impossible provided we work sincerely with a spirit of sacrifice for the country. To develop this spirit of sacrifice we need the co-operation of the employers that they should appreciate and reward merit and achievements and remove wasters and idlers. One who does not work should have no place in any organisation. If we can do this there is no reason that we will not progress. Japanese are Asians. If they have progressed and have become industrially advanced, why can't we do so?

Incentive for Research

Research incentives and improvement in the quality of re-

search go together. Unfortunately we have no incentive for research or if we have, it is negligible. We need increase in the number of scholarships, fellowships, travel grants and travel loans. We need contingent expenses to be attached to each scholarship and fellowship specially in field sciences like Geology, Geography etc. We need improvements in the facilities for work. Administrative red tape must go.

Many of our scientific instruments and apparatus remain idle for want of spare parts or proper repairs. Teachers have no research incentives. Even the post-doctoral increments have been withdrawn in Central Universities when the grades were revised in April 1961 though the revision of grades has nothing to do with research. It is surprising how the University Grants Commission thought it fit to take this retrograde step. It is all the more surprising that even after bringing this to the notice of Dr D.S. Kothari, Chairman of the University Grants Commission, the position remains the same and even this small research incentive to teachers has not been restored so far. Let us hope Dr Kothari will take immediate steps to rectify matters.

Land Struggle in UP

C. K. ARORA

RUMLIBNGS of discontent are clearly heard among the landless peasants of Uttar Pradesh, and if the State government fails to undo the wrongs done to the farmers within a reasonable time, some kind of violent outburst at least in some pockets cannot be ruled out.

Both the SSP and the CPI launched struggles to back the demands of landless labour. Both

parties want some 93 lakh acres of land in the jurisdiction of gaon samajs to be distributed among landless peasants.

The causes of the fresh strains among the landless peasants are easily stated. Illegal distribution of cultivable wasteland by the gaon samajs totalling over 93 lakh acres is the bone of contention. The land taken over from the big landlords after the aboli-

tion of zamindaris in 1953 was handed over to the gaon samajs for distribution among institutions which imparted agricultural know-how and among landless agricultural workers.

Thanks to the influence of the big farmers who turned Congressmen overnight after the dawn of independence, the party managed to capture 96 per cent of the total posts of the pradhans of gaon

samajs in the State in 1953. According to an official report, out of this 96 per cent, 88 per cent were ex-zamindars who spared no efforts to ensure that the benefits of zamindari abolition did not percolate to the landless workers.

These pradhans, who had the responsibility for the distribution of the 93 lakh acres of cultivable wasteland, distributed it among big farmers and business tycoons making a mockery of land reforms.

Greed to Get Rich

Congressmen in the rural areas, in their greed to get rich overnight, joined hands with the local feudal interests and allowed them to pile up wealth at the cost of the masses. Gaining a foothold in local Congress units through intrigue, feudal elements known for their anti-Indian role during the British days manoeuvred to secure vantage positions in the Congress and in the Government.

This led inevitably to alienation of the Congress from the masses.

Of the 93 lakh acres of gaon samaj land, 46 lakh acres was to be kept apart for the common use of the villagers. But of the remaining 35 lakh acres left for landless workers, according to official figures, only 8 lakh acres has been distributed. About 27 lakh acres is yet to be disposed of. This, according to rough estimates, has resulted in an annual loss of one million tonnes of foodgrains.

Besides gaon samaj land, the State has 26.59 lakh acres of fallow land which could have been made cultivable and distributed among the landless peasants. But due to stranglehold of the bureaucracy and lack of interest in land reform among the State's ruling clique, no progress was made.

In later years, when some gaon samajs came under the influence of non-Congress parties, their efforts to recover the illegally distributed land met with stiff resistance. All endeavours to set things right got bogged down in legal proceedings involving huge expenditure. The only hope

for justice for the poor peasants was in some sort of administrative action backed by adequate legislative measures. But the Congress did not care to do anything despite persistent demands.

In the meantime, land hunger among the landless became intense because of the abnormal increase in the cost of living and three successive droughts in three years. This brought the poorer sections in the countryside to the brink of starvation. Their agony worsened as a result of recession in the economy as even unskilled jobs could not be had. While the prices of available foodgrains continued to soar unchecked, the wages of landless labourers, which were already low, dwindled further.

Forced by hardships, the farmers began to organise themselves, particularly in terai area of Bahraich and Lakhimpur-Kheri near the Indo-Nepalese border without the assistance of any political party. Reports of clashes between the men of the zamindars and these peasants began to pour in at the State headquarters in October last.

Frequent Clashes

At the beginning the unrest was confined to Bahraich district dominated by feudal lords which returned Jana Sangh candidates to the State Assembly in the last general election.

Some 500 farmers who migrated from the villages of Ballia and Azamgarh district settled on gaon samaj land in Nanpara sub-division of the Bahraich district and began cultivation in groups. There were frequent clashes when the big zamindars who were in the gaon sabhas made attempts to evict them.

The Jana Sangh, which represents the big farmers of the area and held a dominating position in the then SVD Government, swung into action to restore the land to the zamindars. It raised the bogey of a Naxalbari-type uprising in order to throw the farmers out.

Sri Charan Singh, who was Chief Minister at that time, fell in line with the Jana Sangh.

Instead of dealing sympathetically with the outstanding demand of the kisans, Sri Charan Singh treated the matter as a law and order problem and promptly sent several battalions of armed police.

Strong Resentment

But the discontent and land hunger did not remain confined to Bahraich. Similar reports began to come in from other districts.

The rank and file of the CPI and the SSP forced their leaders to take up the matter with the Chief Minister in the Cabinet. But the SSP and CPI Ministers failed to bend Sri Charan Singh.

Pressure, however, began to mount on the Government as the distribution of the entire surplus land among the landless cultivators was one of the items in the 19-point programme adopted by the non-Congress parties before forming the coalition government. Sri Charan Singh, with his outmoded economic ideas, was later forced into ordering an inquiry into the illegal distribution of gaon samaj land. The first non-Congress Government in this way did not make the land available to farmers despite the promise made by most of the constituent units to this effect before assuming office. Resentment on the issue was so strong that the SSP and the CPI when withdrawing their nominees from the Ministry listed failure on this issue as one of the reasons.

The report of the inquiry ordered by the SVD Government is now available. The probe which covered 40 of the 54 districts of UP revealed blatant irregularities in the distribution of gaon samaj land. About 53,800 cases involving nearly 1.25 acres of land were detected.

As there is no popular set-up in the State, it is the duty of the Central Government to move in the matter. To delay matters is to tax the patience of the farmers. The Centre should set up a special committee to ensure proper distribution of the land.

Administrative Set-up of NEFA

S.K. CHOUBE

AN important controversy has recently cropped up over the NEFA administration, especially after the report of Techno-Economic survey of NEFA by the National Council of Applied Economic Research.

The controversy relates to the Single-Line administrative system. Verrier Elwin, in his "A Philosophy For NEFA," has commended the Single-Line system "which has greatly increased the efficiency of its work and the spirit of cooperation between its officers." The Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission under Sri U. N. Dhebar (1960-61), on which Elwin served, considered the system "exceptionally successful." The NCAER has, however, very strong words for it: "The present Single-Line administration has become outdated. Under this system, the district administrative head is vested with enormous powers which he cannot efficiently use. It also leads to wasteful practices and delays. The system ignores the good work done by the developmental staff and whatever credit there is goes to administrative officers."

The NCAER advocated an immediate study of the administrative set-up in NEFA, and the Administrative Reforms Committee is now engaged on the job. The recommendations of the ARC will be eagerly awaited by all interested in the development of the vast and strategically important hilly lands on our north-eastern border.

The persons who will have most to say, and even, possibly,

ventilate certain grievances, will be the development personnel of the Administration. Meanwhile, it will be necessary to examine how far the Single-Line administration will be competent to deal with the development pattern that will be inaugurated with the establishment of Panchayati Raj in NEFA on October 2 this year.

The administrative system was organised in 1956 on a Single-Line in which each Division was given the status of a district under a Political Officer. Below the Division, there were a few Sub-Divisions in the charge of Assistant Political Officers, though sometimes the Political Officer could retain direct charge of a Sub-Division. At the base were the Circles under the Circle Officers, also known as Base Superintendents. At each level the administrative officer was in direct charge of Development and the Treasury. The technical staff of the Development Section had to receive orders from the Administrative Officer of the same level who would direct the service conditions, transfer, etc. of the former. Assam Rifles, now policing NEFA, is however outside the Single-Line and is placed under the charge of its Inspector-General.

It is necessary here to describe the constitutional position of NEFA. It is constitutionally a part of Assam—more specifically a Tribal Area, mentioned in Part B of para 20 of the Sixth Schedule. Originally Part B of the para mentioned the Naga Hills Tract along with NEFA. With the attainment of Statehood by Nagaland, NEFA remains the solitary area under this para. Para 18 of the Sixth Schedule

provides that the Governor may, subject to the previous approval of the President, by public notification, apply all or any of the provisions of the Sixth Schedule relating to the administration of the autonomous districts of Assam to NEFA, or any part of it. He may, in a similar way, exclude the area, or a part of it, from Part B of the para. Until such change is done the area will be administered by the President through the Governor as his Agent. While acting as the Agent of the President, the Governor shall act in his "discretion". The "discretion" here means the absence of scope for ministerial advice at State level. Thus the present administrative pattern is very similar to that of the "Excluded Areas" under the Government of India Act, 1935, though para 18 of the Sixth Schedule lays down that the area will be governed as a "Union Territory". The apparent discrepancy is due possibly to the aversion of the fathers of our Constitution to the much-abused phrase "Excluded Area".

Till the end of July 1965 the NEFA administration was placed under the External Affairs Ministry. On August 1, 1965, it was handed over to the Union Home Ministry. On September 1, 1965, the Political Officers were renamed Deputy Commissioners, following the pattern of district administration of the Assam plains.

Till the creation of Nagaland as a State in 1964, the two Part B districts (NEFA and Nagaland) were under the charge of two "Commissioners" who were under the "Adviser" to the

The writer is a Lecturer at St. Edmund's College, Shillong.

Governor on NEFA and Nagaland. In 1964, with the attainment of Statehood by Nagaland, the post of "Commissioner" for NEFA was abolished, the "Adviser" being placed directly in charge of the NEFA administration.

The present Central administration of NEFA is under the charge of the "Adviser", whose status and authority have not

been precisely defined. He is, however, in charge of a Secretariat which is independent of the Assam Secretariat, and has under him four Secretaries.

The fundamental question to be answered right now is this: What is the aim of the administration? Is the NEFA administration to be ultimately merged with the administration of Assam as anticipated by Elwin or to be

ultimately built into Statehood?

The Constitution certainly suggests the growth of the NEFA into one or more autonomous districts within Assam. In such a case, what is the status of the NEFA Secretariat? What is the status of the Adviser? And why should his office be kept at Shillong, and not somewhere in NEFA, in the interest of better administrative convenience?

AMERICAN SCENE

Significance of McCarthy

I. F. STONE

OF course there were genuine elements in the mourning over the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy. Most people are decent when the issues do not become too distant or abstract to elude their sympathy. Here the elements were simple: a widowed wife, fatherless children and an earnest young man; imbued, amid the other mixed motives that move all of us, with more than average idealism; promising a great potential for leadership.

But mixed with the grief were other elements with roots as old in the makeup of mankind: superstition and a desire to appease the dead, especially on the part of those who disliked him; the ancient feeling about the blood sacrifice, which runs deep in all religions, and especially in the worship of a Crucified God and a Sacrificed Son. There was also love of pageantry, particularly in funerals, which brought out the crowds, along the railroad route to Washington, and the viewers before the television machines. Violence is their most popular

fare and the second Kennedy assassination, like the first, provided TV with a wondrous opportunity to exploit violence in the very act piously of deploring it.

The main element here was the Spectacle, spiced by a sense of guilt, fed by all those sermons, clerical and journalistic, on how wickedly violent we Americans are. Vicariously, as in those Westerns, but with a greater immediacy, people had a fine sense of released aggression and cleansing contrition, the *catharsis* Aristotle prized in tragic poetry.

To Begin Gun Control

We dwell astringently on these unsavory aspects people prefer to hide because we would like to see the shock of the crime, following so soon after the killing of our greatest Negro leader, harnessed to purposes that match the real moral dimensions. The emphasis on gun control, which we of course approve, strikes us as a prime example of how easily people can be led to miss the point. If we indeed value human life, if we want to see bloodshed ended, then the gun control should begin in Vietnam and at

the Pentagon. If the President's expressions of concern were more than conventional humbug, he had the power to show it by some signal act, like an end to all bombing in North Vietnam, or a unilateral case-fire accompanied by a plea to the enemy to follow suit. This would indeed set an example of non-violence and show the world that America had the will to set a new course. For the United States and its President are today the world's largest practitioners of violence.

Granted that in the terrible civil war in Vietnam, crimes are not confined to one side, but our contribution, and Johnson's contribution, in sheer, impersonal, mechanical and automated slaughter, by bomb, napalm and devilish "anti-personnel" devices transcend all else and are threatening to annihilate a nation and make a whole area unlivable, even for the innocent beasts of the jungle. To greet the occasion with the appointment of another typical stuffed shirt Establishment commission to regulate control of hand guns and rifles at home is revolting.

Of course, as a President, Johnson feels deeply about an

This is taken from I.F. Stone's Weekly, Washington DC, June 24, 1968.

unregulated gun traffic that is a threat to the lives of Presidents and Presidential contenders. But what of the bigger violence into which he would thrust some of the best of our youth? How does the fanaticism which fired the deaths of King and Kennedy differ from the stubborn fanaticism which leads Johnson to go on with the killing in Vietnam? How can we expect to cut down racial and political violence at home when we train our youth for it abroad?

Duty of Kennedy Clan

It is not Johnson alone whom we have the right to ask for evidence that the words they used in mourning are more than smug rubbish. We also have a right to ask of Teddy Kennedy and the Kennedy clan. Robert Kennedy before he was killed was asking for a unified effort by the peace forces so that the American people could have a real choice next November. He regretted that he had listened to advisers like Sorenson and let McCarthy take the initiative on peace.

The finest memorial Teddy and the Kennedy clan could erect to Bobby, the best way to show our best youth it was too harsh in condemning his indecision, would be to throw their vast political, human and financial resources behind McCarthy and the peace movement. To do otherwise is to downgrade Bobby's last brave stand. This is particularly true if Teddy accepts what Bobby firmly declined, second place on the Humphrey ticket. Bobby felt strongly that 10 consecutive primaries had shown that he and McCarthy, by piling up from 70 to 88 percent of the vote, spoke for the grass roots and the party's rank-and-file against the party machines. He wanted unification of the peace forces. His family ought to make good on those last wishes.

We could not help but notice the symbolism in the appearance—at the family's request—of four Green Berets from the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center (as it was renamed after his death) at Fort Bragg in the vigil at St. Patrick's. For in all the uproar about violence these Green Berets

represent to the colonial countries a counter-revolutionary force, a menace to the aspirations of the poor in the underdeveloped world, a bulwark (for all their liberal rhetoric) of the oligarchy. These, to put it plainly, are the trained assassins of the Pax Americana, the de luxe arm of the rich man's war we wage in the poorer regions of the earth. We do not think their appearance at St. Patrick's comports with the deeper understanding in John F. Kennedy's last year as President nor with the direction in which Bobby Kennedy was developing. Nothing could do more to wipe out the unpleasant implications of the Green Berets at the bier than if Teddy were resolutely to pick up the fight for peace where his brother left off, and take second place on McCarthy's ticket, not Humphrey's.

Of course Humphrey is getting ready to readjust his image again. Bill Moyers has forecast a shift. But we have as little faith in any maneuver by Humphrey toward the peace movement as we have in Rockefeller's multi-million dollar campaign of demagogic advertising on that and the race issue. If Humphrey's past position on Vietnam was mere loyalty to Johnson, why did he find it necessary almost two months after Johnson's withdrawal from the race to tell *US News & World Report* (May 27), "If Nixon and Humphrey should be the candidates in the general election. I think our views of the war would be too far apart"?

Johnson has been wooing Moscow with the carrot, Nixon has hinted he would use the club. That is a difference one would have thought Humphrey would emphasize. Why, instead, did he go out of his way to cuddle up to Nixon, as he is getting ready now to caddle up to the peace forces?

Of course we are for gun control. We see it as another instance of how powerful interest lobbies dominate the government and are allowed to profit from killing. In this the gun lobby is like the cigarette lobby, which spreads its advertising on TV unhindered despite all the findings about lung cancer, or like the military-indus-

trial complex, which fattens on the billions spent for the development of ever more terrifying means of mass production. But we see the gun control uproar as a way to deflect attention from the more fundamental problems of the Big Gun lobby.

Though we have resisted the conspiracy theory in the killing of John F. Kennedy, we believe enough has come to light clearly to show a conspiracy in the killing of Martin Luther King and very possibly of Robert Kennedy. A well-heeled crowd of white supremacists will not be deterred by gun control from the murder of other black leaders. Kennedy was killed by a hand gun but if Sirhan had associates they could easily have eluded gun control. The essence is not gun control but hate control. This is not an argument against gun control; there are far too many guns around. But gun control will not prevent insurrection unless we end the frustration in the ghetto and the settlement of inter-human disputes by force, as in the Palestine conflict which Sirhan reflected, and above all in Vietnam. If we have no choice in November but Humphrey or Nixon—especially if Humphrey is accompanied by a Teddy Kennedy sellout—then the nihilistic anger will deepen. Events everywhere have shown that tiny groups of revolutionaries can polarize whole campuses and countries when a malaise of this kind grows.

McCarthy Way

Only McCarthy offers a way to escape, a way to make democratic processes meaningful again, a way to preserve peace at home by moving swiftly toward it in Vietnam. He has grown, his campaign has deepened his appeal has widened. All of us professional dopesters and commentators—myself included—have underestimated him. No man has been counted out more often; no man has made the polls and the political consensus look sillier more often. We think he has a fighting chance, if we all close ranks behind him.

His speech to the Fellowship of Reconciliation in New York June 13 was one of his finest. It

struck a new note when it said that in Vietnam we must end the war "under conditions which do justice not only to our honor but to the honor of our opponents, and most of all to the common wish to live and to rebuild." This recalls de Gaulle's call to the Algerian rebels for "a peace of the brave" with honor to both sides. He called—as the next step—to a liquidation of the cold war atmosphere and an arms reduction agreement with the Soviet Union to lift the menace of thermonuclear war. He called for an end to the world policeman role and to letting American policy be made—tail-wag-the-dog style—"by small and often undemocratic governments who get our support only by their claim to be anti-Communist."

McCarthy may be our last chance for peace. We do not know what will happen after the election. There are ominous signs. There are indications that the conviction of Dr Spock and three associates is but the beginning of a whole series of prosecutions intended to break resistance to war and intimidate the peace movement. Why the further prosecutions in the works if the Johnson Administration really looks toward peace? They serve a political purpose only if the war is to escalate again, and some way must be found in advance to prevent effective protest.

There is another factor which makes redoubled efforts for McCarthy urgent. There are signs that the Johnson Administration at Paris has upped the price for a complete cessation of the bombing in the North. At one time its position was that we would only stop the bombing if we were sure talks would follow. Talks are on now. The San Antonio formula and the Clifford explanation was that we would end the bombing totally if we could assume that the enemy would not afterward raise the level of supplies and reinforcements into the South.

But now it seems that Harriman is asking that Hanoi agree to shut off aid to the south altogether before we will end the bombing. This, it appears, is the

real meaning of Harriman's emphasis on restoring the DMZ and enforcing the 1962 Laotian agreement. The first would end all movement across the zone; the second would shut off the so-called Ho Chi Minh trail in Eastern Laos.

This means that the price is still surrender and that we still hope to use the bombing of the North to end the war in the South. This is beginning to leak out of briefings in Paris (see Thomas Fenton's backgrounder from Paris in the Perspective section of the *Baltimore Sun*, Sunday, June 16) and out of briefings in Washington. One such was reflected in an unsigned piece on the opposite editorial page of the *Washington Post*, June 15, which said "This double request is acknowledged to be *perhaps a bit more* (our italics) than the assumption in President Johnson's San Antonio formula." We managed to check this out with one official, but only on a not for attribution basis. The explanation given was that in asking a shutoff of both the DMZ and the Ho Chi Minh trail Harriman was only making "proposals" for reciprocal moves which would lead us to end the bombing, not setting "conditions" for doing so!

Distinction Without Difference

This seems to us a distinction without a difference. It must stiffen the other side to arrive in Paris and find that we have upped our terms—whether as "proposals" or "conditions"—for a complete cessation of the bombing. This strengthens the evidence already reported (1) that Harriman on the eve of Paris showed no readiness for any political compromise; and (2) that Johnson's real strategy is to defuse the peace movement during the campaign by the talks and the limited cessation. After the election, whether the victor be Humphrey or Nixon, the essential Johnson policy can be continued of striving to restore an "independent" South Vietnam under our wing.

We still believe a major factor in limiting the bombing was to end the extraordinarily high cost, in planes and pilots, of the raids

on heavily defended Hanoi and Haiphong. World War II experience showed air raids most effective not as a terror weapon—Mary McCarthy's magnificent series from Hanoi in the *New York Review of Books* shows bombing has only inspired greater resistance—but as a means of attacking transportation routes. We have increased the number and intensity of our air raids but limited them to the transportation lines of the panhandle. "Admiral Cagle's pilots claim," Keyes Beech of the *Chicago Daily News* reported from the nuclear powered flagship USS Enterprise in the Tonkin Gulf (*Washington Post*, June 15) "that they are doing a more effective job of disrupting Communist supply lines to South Vietnam by concentrating on a smaller target area than before President Johnson imposed the bombing limitation on March 31." The Rear Admiral himself told Beech, "From a purely tactical military viewpoint I see no point in resuming the bombing, under the same target restrictions."

Even Johnson only claims that we are destroying 20 percent of the shipments. Our guess would be that his 20 percent increase in costs to the enemy (if Johnson's estimate, unlike our other war claims, are not exaggerated) is paid for many times over in the costs to us of the bombardment. Some day the whole truth will be known, and we suspect the disparity in costs will prove to be enormous. In the meantime it is not cutting down the pace of the war in the South nor our casualties. Its only effect is political, to disarm the peace movement. Peace now depends on reawakening the peace movement and on the toppling of the Saigon regime under Viet Cong attacks. It is there that the issue will be decided.

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Central Govt Employees Astir

O. P. GUPTA

CENTRAL Government employees are once again preparing for a strike.

Because of their number—25 lakhs under one employer—and the strategic position they occupy in the socio-economic life of the nation, their action is of great significance and no one can ignore unrest in the civil services.

The All-India Railwaymen Federation has already decided to organise a 48-hour token strike on September 11 and if things remain unsettled, a general strike in December this year.

The All-India Defence Employees Federation has decided to organise a token strike on August 16. They have also decided to join a common struggle on common demands.

The Confederation of Central Government Employees and Workers representing P & T, Civil Aviation, Audit, Income Tax and CPWD and employees of many other Ministries of the Government of India has indicated that it will organise action if the basic issues of minimum wage and full neutralisation remain unsettled. The National Council will meet in the second Week of July.

The INTUC has some hold among Railway and Defence employees. It has not yet indicated its position. But as things stand it will not be able to opt out of a struggle if it takes place.

Thus a major confrontation is on the agenda. A situation much more serious than that on September 11, 1967 will arise.

The author is the Secretary-General, Confederation of Central Government Employees and Workers' Unions,

During foreign rule, Government servants enjoyed better status, security and amenities because the British wanted to keep them out of the national movement. But during the last 40 years the workers through many struggles have won similar concessions. In fact, a worker in private employment cannot be dismissed at the President's pleasure. A Government servant has no appeal against such displeasure. Even in respect of wages, the employees under Tatas, Birlas, etc. or in banks, chemicals and other industries in the private sector or in public sector (LIC, Airlines etc.) are much better placed. Government servants in Railways, Defence, P&T, etc. who are not different from industrial employees, have been denied the benefits of wage boards and industrial laws.

There are two major demands which have been pending settlement for a long time—minimum wage and full neutralisation.

Other issues such as retirement and merger of DA with pay to enable employees to get a fair pension are also agitating them.

It was in the background of prosperity in the First Five Year Plan that the 15th ILC decided the guidelines for wage boards, in fixing the minimum wage. Based on their recommendation, a minimum wage of Rs 125 was justified in 1957. It should be equal to Rs 260 today with the cost of living index at over 200. The 2nd CPC, instead of doing justice, just merged DA with pay and added Rs 5 or Rs 10 and reshaped the scale. The disappointing nature of its

recommendations resulted in a five-day strike in 1960 in which 5 lakh employees participated.

Some controversies arose about the content of the recommendations of the 15th ILC, especially in respect of the Diet formula. After the 1960 strike, the 16th ILC had got it studied. Accordingly, the lowest wage should be Rs 200.

For various reasons, especially because of the Chinese and Pakistani aggression, these demands could not be re-opened after the 1960 strike. With the creation of a Joint Consultation Machinery—where compulsory arbitration is provided for the National Federation of P&T Employees raised the issue in January 1967.

The DA Formula which has become almost as permanent as wage has agitated the workers all these years because, instead of becoming an instrument of wage protection, it has become a mechanism for reducing the purchasing power of the worker. It has mostly hit middle class workers and those with long years of service even in Class IV.

Thus the standard of living has been falling with every increase of DA. The Government employees are losing in the manner shown in table on next page after the Gajenderagadkar's award.

The position of employees who are at the maximum of the slabs is the worst.

Today the DA is almost equal to pay, but this is not reflected in the pension and therefore senior officials suffer greatly.

The proposal of the Government to retire officials after 25 years service or at the age of

at 175 c.o.l. according to				at 245 c.o.l. according to			
	Gajendra-gadkar	Full neutralisation	Loss	Gajendra-gadkar	Dass	Full neutralisation	Loss
70	117	122	5	153	155	164	11
109	156	190	34	192	194	257	65
110	180	192	12	222	237	259	37
149	219	261	42	261	276	350	89
150	240	262	22	288	312	352	64
209	299	366	67	347	371	491	144
210	320	367	47	347	408	493	119
399	509	698	89	563	597	938	375
400	520	700	180	580	616	940	360
449	569	786	217	629	665	1063	424

50 is not as simple as it looks. It will not only help the Government to get rid of people whom it declares unfit or inefficient but will also enable those who have built fruitful contacts with capitalists to get out of service. But the opposition of the unions is not on these grounds. Today when due to automation, retrenchment is on the agenda, we cannot arm the Government with such powers. Moreover, victimisation of active union workers is always apprehended.

Workers have always stood for settlement of issues through negotiations but they do not hesitate to create sanctions, if necessary, for fruitful settlement. In Government services, where the employer being the State is armed with police and constitutional powers, the task of creating such sanctions is always a difficult one. Nevertheless, some struggles have taken place. The Government has also realised that repression is no solution.

The need for a negotiating machinery which will reduce the authority of the Government to act as arbitrator on its own actions as employer was recommended by the First Pay Commission in 1947. In the 1960 strike notice, one of the demands was for the creation of such a machinery with provision for compulsory arbitration. The Government continued to deny such a machinery till 1966 when finally it agreed to constitute a Joint Consultative Machinery—JCM—on the Whitley Council model. This machinery provides facilities for reaching negotiated

settlements: If issues relating to pay and allowances, working hours, leave, etc., remained unsettled, they can—if the Unions or the Government so desire—be referred to arbitration. Non-arbitrable matters are to be decided by the Minister in consultation with the Labour Minister.

Normally after the creation of such a machinery there should be no cause for labour disputes. But the difficulty is that the Government does not allow the machinery to function in the proper spirit. It knows that the claims of Government servants—arbitrarily rejected all these years—will receive favourable consideration if they are referred to arbitration. When most of the wage boards have fixed the lowest wage even in unremunerative industries at Rs. 170 and above, how can the Government plead for retention of a minimum wage of Rs 135? Moreover, 4% bonus given to workers in industries irrespective of loss or profit is an addition to their wage. Therefore the Government has systematically tried to create hurdles in the way of proper functioning of the JCM. They take time to record disagreements. They delayed the appointment of an arbitration board and now they want to declare that arbitration as such is not applicable to some of the major demands. Having agreed to send unsettled issues to an arbitration board, they cannot now decide unilaterally whether issues are arbitrable or not. Therefore, the controversy today is not on the merits of the demand—i.e., how much wage

should be paid—but on the question whether the issues are arbitrable or not, i.e., whether they will be settled through the JCM or workers will be compelled to organise a strike for securing their demands.

Government servants are conscious of lack of public sympathy for their economic demands because the Government is in a position to confuse issues by saying that their acceptance will result in increase in taxes. As if by raising the profits of capitalists whom the Government does not want to control, the people's sufferings do not increase. Similarly, the controversy about "wage increase resulting in price increase" is totally untenable since prices have mainly increased due to manipulation by hoarders.

No one disputes the difficult economic position of the Government, but this does not mean that workers should be denied what is due to them for all time. When Sri Morarji Desai appealed to the workers in August 1967 not to withdraw arrears of DA with a view to helping him control prices, the trade union leadership responded. Earlier the employees donated one day's wage at the time of the Chinese aggression when a DA revision was overdue. Thus a co-operative attitude is not lacking, but obviously there is limit to patience. Unless the Government proves its intention to control prices and curb the profits of capitalists, Government servants cannot be expected to become sacrificial goats for its wrong policies.

Let the need for payment of minimum wage create compulsions for the Government to change its economic policies. The 1960 strike compelled the Government to enquire into the distribution of wealth. However, nothing concrete was done. We expect a similar situation will arise again, with better results this time.

At present the strike action proposed by the various unions is not coordinated. There are forces in all organisations which would prefer to plough a lone furrow. We have reactionary forces which have always opposed a joint front. The INTUC for political

reasons will avoid a joint struggle. But there are some "revolutionaries" in the Confederation who oppose joint front with Railways, Defence, etc. The opposition to unity is basically meant to avoid a struggle and seek unilateral settlement. But when a struggle becomes unavoidable, unity becomes irresistible.

The existence of the JCM has enabled various organised

sections to close their ranks and take a unified stand. While the JCM has failed to function satisfactorily, it has brought about unity of thinking among the different organisations. Therefore, in spite of internal differences, the leadership of the unions cannot avoid taking a unified stand in the JCM. The language used may be different, tempers and expressions may vary but

the stand on demands is identical.

In the circumstances, a joint struggle is inevitable. The Government may like to refer the issues to a commission, but this will not solve the problem. The only way to avoid agitation is for the Government to settle issues either through negotiations or by reference to the arbitration board.

Bihar: Fall of Paswan Ministry

GIRISH MISHRA and BRAJ KUMAR PANDEY

THE Second United Front Government in Bihar headed by Sri Bhola Paswan went out of office only after 96 days. It resigned of its own accord for the Chief Minister preferred principles, honesty and devotion of his people to the clinging to power by surrendering to the feudal chief of Ramgarh. He has proved himself true to his principles and loyal to the people of the State.

With the decision of the SSP to join the Government, there was happiness all over the State that the Ministry would be stable and do some concrete work. Its programme inspired new hopes because it was much clearer and improved upon than the previous one. Secondly, the firm handling of the affairs of the State by the Chief Minister was another pointer. He, from the very beginning, refused to be bullied by the Raja of Ramgarh. He did not oblige the Raja by allocating the portfolio of Mines and Minerals to him. He made it clear that he would not order the withdrawal of 281 cases against the Raja's firms, nor would he show any slackness in looking after the public interest by putting up the lawyer of Raja's choice in charge of the Government side in the cases against the Raja's firms. He ordered prompt enquiry into

police firing at Chiri in the Chatanagpur region. Wherever there was any trouble he personally rushed and handled the situation tactfully. Even after the threats and pressures from the Jan Sangh, he did not allow certain items like the land reform measures, protection and development of the interests of the minorities being deleted from the programme.

It is another matter that the programme could not be put into practice. This was because the Paswan Ministry did not have sufficient time at its hand. Secondly, some of the constituents of the United Front particularly the SSP and the Janata Party did not behave rationally. It is unfortunate that the SSP wasted almost three months in solving its internal problem of the selection of its nominees. It failed to take stock of the situation of the State and foil the game of the Raja by earlier joining the Government. By the time the SSP announced the names of its nominees, it was too late. The Raja had already intensified his pressures.

After the fall of the Shoshit Dal Government, Sri Mahesh Prasad Sinha, the leader of the Congress legislature Party wanted to form a government with the help of some of the Bhumihaar defectors

from the Congress, the Shoshit Dal and the Raja. He made gestures to the Raja. It was understood that if Sri Sinha was allowed to form the government, the Raja would be given the Deputy Chief Ministership and the desired portfolios. It was widely believed that a number of defectors from the Congress had the blessings and good wishes of Sri Sinha. But the Central Congress leadership refused to give the green signal to Sri Sinha and he had to reconcile himself with the Paswan Ministry.

The Raja continued to threaten Sri Paswan and hoped that the Chief Minister would yield sooner or later. To pressurize further, he visited Delhi on the eve of the AICC Session and met the Bihar Congress leaders. But when Sri Paswan did not show any sign of yielding, the Raja sent his resignation on "grounds of health". He charged the Chief Minister later that he was not allowed access to certain files of his own choice and, therefore, could not function as a Minister.

Talks were held and efforts made. But the Raja continued his game of threatening the existence of the Government. The Raja could not come out publicly because of the opposition from his brother and other members of

his family. It seems Dr Basant Narayan Singh, the younger brother of the Raja has been growing tired of his tactics. Though till now he has followed the Raja with unflinching loyalty, it may not be surprising if at some future date, their differences become public and they fail to agree in their plans of action.

Further, the Raja was aware of the fact that the Congress might co-operate with him in the toppling business; but he was not sure that the Congress would form a ministry with him. There were a number of factors for this. Firstly, further defection from the Congress to the newly-formed Loktantrik Dal could not be ruled out. Secondly, the leader of the Rajput faction, Sri Satyendra Narayan Sinha was agreeable to only a limited cooperation with the Raja. He was opposed to the formation of a Congress government in coalition with the Raja for the fear that the leadership of a Rajput faction might pass out of his hands. The Raja is a superior Rajput with ample resources. It may be recalled that Sri Satyendra Narayan Sinha had opposed the entry of the Raja into the Congress a few years ago.

The Raja showed signs of relenting after a few days and it seemed the storm had blown over; but he put further conditions: he worked someone else to be Chief Minister, in place of Sri Paswan. It is said that the Raja had Sri Deep Narayan Singh, a Cabinet Minister in mind and asked for the transfer of certain offices. Sri Paswan might have yielded but for the pressures of the CPI and the other progressive parties. The Raja felt insulted when the Chief Secretary refused to show certain papers and documents to him.

The Raja went on bargaining with both the sides. It was said that he was to ditch the united front in the hour of attack from the Congress, that is at the time of moving the no confidence motion. The motion was to come at 4 p.m. Sri Paswan knew it and about one and a half hour before he resigned and asked for the dissolution of the Vidhan Sabha. When the resignation

was announced in the Vidhan Sabha, the Raja who was sitting on the Treasury benches was not aware of this. He was outwitted probably for the first time in his political life. Sri Paswan exposed the game of the Raja.

The Governor should have acceded to the request of Sri Paswan but he invited Sri Mahesh Prasad Sinha to form the Government. Though Sri Sinha wanted to do so, yet he wanted time to consult the Central Congress leaders. The Congress Party was divided on the question. Sri K. B. Sahay wanted that the Raja and the Shoshit Dal should form a minority government with the Congress which was not liked by Sri Satyendra Narayan Sinha and the others. Sri Satyendra Narayan Sinha, as we have already stated, was scared of the Raja.

Sri M. P. Sinha failed to persuade the Central leaders not to impose the President's Rule. The Vidhan Sabha has been dissolved and the President's Rule has been imposed in Bihar.

The mid-term election is likely to be held in February next. Most of the political parties are now engaged in preparation for the election.

The Congress Party's internal rifts have been aggravated because of the chances of the entry of Sri Sahay into the Vidhan Sabha. The BPCC has failed to elect a new President and whenever the election is held, it will be a hotly contested one, because the President will have a major say in the distribution of tickets.

It is thus clear that although the machinations of a section of Congressmen emboldened the Raja of Ramgarh, he could not dictate to his terms to the United Front Ministry led by Sri Bhola Paswan. In the coming mid-term election, the Raja of Ramgarh ceases to be a liability on the side of the United Front. If anything, his links with some sections of the Congress have once again been exposed. Such a development augurs well for the politics of Bihar.

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the last laugh

FOR over a month now the Ramakrishnapuram heyne has been at large, and all attempts to stalk him down have failed. Chief Executive Councillor Vijay Kumar Malhotra of the Delhi Metropolitan Council blamed it squarely on the Home Ministry which has steadily refused to let the Jan Sangh-run Metropolitan Council have police powers. He maintained that the City's crime increase was due to this intransigence. 'Look,' he told a morning *darbar* off the record, 'does anyone think the heyne is going to have the last laugh? Or Chavan for that matter? The last laugh will be ours.'

It wasn't clear if he had meant the Metropolitan Council or the Jan Sangh. The Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee was quick enough to retort: its President asserted that the heyne was not a law and order problem. Nor were the Meerut riots for that matter; the Jan Sangh had better take a saner look at things. But the DPCC would not be behind anybody else in demanding a total ban on the slaughter of the cow and its progeny, which was all that the Jan Sangh and the Puri Sankaracharya had demanded. But the Congress would go a step further: it would demand a ban on the slaughter, murder, mayhem or molestation of not only the cow and her progeny, but her cousins, in-laws, dependents and friends—on secular, socialistic grounds. It will also demand protection against Hazari-type enquiries against the cow or politically motivated demands for the declaration of the cow's assets to

the DMS. Against the backdrop of all this, the PCC Chief reminded sombrely that the Ramakrishnapuram heyne *was lifting cattle*, who were the progeny of the cow.

This, the Chief Executive Councillor felt, was much too below the belt. He threatened to revive the Kutch satyagraha in Ramakrishnapuram. The SSP announced its readiness to join in. Congress sources scoffed at the projected agitation, and said that Ramakrishnapuram was a residential colony of government employees and not a disputed territory. This was challenged by the Jan Sangh loner M.L. Sondhi, who announced that he and a dozen Tibetan lamas would undertake a silent prayer-demonstration in front of the Chinese Embassy to win for the Tibetan people the freedom of transmigration.

The CPI while condemning the set-up in Tibet, registered its simultaneous disapproval of what Sondhi was trying to do. Transmigration of souls was no way of combating the heyne in Ramakrishnapuram, nor was it necessary to involve oneself in international polemics for the purpose. Moreover, only international monopoly and the CIA's many foundations stood to benefit by transmigration; it was altogether at variance with international legality. Left Congress sources took the opportunity of launching a fresh, and more bitter than earlier, attack on Communists in non-Congress coalitions, and to call for a more stringent implementation of the Hyderabad reso-

lution on secularism and toppling.

Commenting on all this, the famous economic columnist and financial witch Moving Claw wrote in his column, 'All this has arisen out of the heyne. It is indeed strange that political parties should so strive to put the people on the wrong scent, on a variety of wrong scents. The problem here is one of stark inefficiency: the police in the public sector have prevented entrepreneurial individual hunters from shooting the beast. The Government should liberalise its gun licence and ammunition permit policy, and make it generally possible for the people to pursue the heyne and a free way of life like they do in Los Angeles. The SSP must immediately be de-nationalised and Dr Hazari drafted for the job which International Communism prevented Professor Thacker from accepting. And if the nation's police is handed over to the proprietors of this journal, even if parts are imported and assembled instead of having the thing manufactured outright here, our proprietors will make a handsome profit on each assembled policeman. This will undo the damage done by the Shaktiman trucks of old, and encourage capital formation.

Patil, and according to some sources the Deputy Prime Minister, were not unenthusiastic about the proposal. Chandra Sekhar thereupon quoted from Karl Marx at great length, then went on to quote from Groucho Marx and Boris Karloff. Another old Young Turk, who had earlier threatened to expose all the secrets of Moving Claw's proprietors de-

manded the immediate toppling of all non-Congress governments left in the country, and expressed his desire to join any progressive fraternal delegation to North Viet Nam, provided the delegation spent four months each in Tashkent and Sochi.

The most personal reaction to the heyna came from the Capital's association of accredited Udyog Bhavan touts. 'The works Ministry has behaved scandalously', said a spokesman of the association. 'While it refused to increase the housing quota for ac-

credited Udyog Bhavan touts, and even refused to set apart a mere dozen suites in the UCN-TAD flats on Curzon Road, it has made an out-of-turn allotment to the hyena in Ramakrishnapuram. The hyena is not accredited, it is a mere free lancer. This is not the way to help create a free press.

Political teactions were proliferating in his manner, when the Prime Minister decided to administer her healing touch. She paid a state visit to Ramakrishnapuram, and found the residents

surprisingly united against the heyna and against drivers of DTU-operated private buses. 'Never since the Chinese withdrew,' said she, 'have I seen such an expression of national integration. I am convinced more than ever that we can manage without the Chinese.'

'A corny nation,' said the hyena, lifting the fourth child off a planned family. After he had made a meal of the child, he sat down to have the last laugh.

Charvaka

Communications

FRENCH CP AND MOHIT SEN

SRI Mohit Sen's article "France; Old and New Myths" (*Mainstream*,) June 29, 1968 is nothing but an exercise in phrase-mongering intermixed with, invective and abuse.

All those who view the recent events in France differently from Sri Sen, and particularly those who are critical of the role of the leadership of the French Communist Party, are either the "frustrated intellectuals" or "anarchists, Trotskyite and Maoist scribes." And just because Sri Sen has proclaimed them as such, they have to be vanquished as Lenin vanquished the Narodniks and Stalin vanquished the anarchism of Trotskyites.

Sri Sen's first grouse against the "anarchists" and "Trotskyites" is that they are trying "to obscure the role of the working class, and above all, the role of its vanguard—the Communist Party of France."

Firstly, no one can deny the role that the working class can play in a revolutionary situation of the type that existed in France

during the hectic days of student strikes and demonstrations. This is particularly so in an advanced industrial country. But from this one cannot automatically infer (take the case of the American working class), as Sri Sen seems to do, that the French workers led by their "vanguard" party *did* actually play this role—a role that some bad people are trying to obscure. Secondly, one cannot accept the proposition that Communist parties, since they are Communist Parties, automatically become the vanguard of revolutionary movements. Communist parties have to function as the vanguard to earn that epithet. They cannot be the vanguard merely by definition.

From all available news and indications it is clear that the French Communist Party did not play the 'vanguard' role in the recent happenings in France. Sri Sen does not accept the versions and opinions of such sources as the "London *Economist*, the inveterate searcher for anti-soviet

'Communism', K.S. Karol of *New Statesman* or the frustrated intellectuals clustering round the *Calcutta Frontier*". Let it be so, I quote below the version and the implied opinion of Delhi *Patriot* which wrote in its issue of May 31, 1968:

"The second most miserable man in France today after President Charles de Gaulle should be the Secretary-General of the French Communist Party Mr Waldech-Rochet. The President's present problem is only to make up his mind whether he will stay in office or quit. Mr Rochet is facing a worse dilemma. He has to decide whether his party will lead a social revolution in whose success it has no faith or alienate a whole generation of French youth by trying to convert a political upheaval into a routine economic struggle for higher wages and shorter hours of work. This zigzag course that the Communist Party of France has followed during the past few weeks would suggest that Mr Rochet and his collea-

gues have already opted for the latter alternative. When the student trouble broke out at Nanterre, they (French Communist Party leaders) denounced Mr Cohn-Bendit and his young colleagues as irresponsible extremists. Yet a few days later the Communist led trade unions had come out in support of the students. Similarly, Mr Waldech Rochet and his friends might probably have accepted the Government's offer of a 10 percent rise in workers' wages and some vague educational reforms and called off the whole movement on that basis. But the workers rejected the Government's terms and the Communist leaders also had to ask the people to keep on fighting till the Government yielded further."

The above quote from *Patriot* (I hope Sri Sen will not dub *Patriot* as an anarchist or Trotskyite paper) clearly indicates the role played by the so-called vanguard—the French Communist Party—in the French upheaval. No one can blame the French working class with its revolutionary traditions; the blame is squarely on the leadership of Communist Party which has led the French working class down the path of responsibility in the trade union movement, down the path of economism which always leads to the dead-end of ideological and political bankruptcy. When the students were fighting at the barricades and millions of workers were on strike, occupying the factories, the Communist leaders of the C.G.T. were haggling over a 10 percent or more increase in wages and an hour less of work in the factories. And as *Patriot* points out, left to themselves the Communist leaders would have accepted the wage increase offered by the Government and withdrawn the strike, but the workers rejected the offer. The 'vanguard' acted as the rearguard. Sri Sen explodes no myths, as he claims, but is merely trying to reinforce an old myth that the Communist Parties have a monopoly of the revolution, that they are the natural vanguard, that they alone determine the time, place and hour of revolution.

Sri Sen then conjures up a whole series of events to prove that (a) the French working class led by the French Communist Party played the leading role in the French upheavals; and (b) that "the students were agitating around immediate and quite modest demands for changes in the educational system." According to him "they (the students) were not revolutionary. Nor were their methods particularly revolutionary". Let me quote *Link* of Delhi, which describes the role of the French C.P. as well as that of the students. It says: "At the end of March 22 to be precise, there was a Vietnam demonstration at the annexe of the University of Paris at Nanterre in the suburbs. Following some incidents disciplinary action was taken against some students. This led to more trouble. Solidarity demonstration began immediately....."

The March 22 movement failed to receive the supporters of the Communist Party. They opposed it. The supporters of the students' March 22 movement were called "Les Chinois," anarchists the Trotskyites. *Link* writes: "It is worth recording that it was the Communist mayor of Nanterre who in the first instance sought police intervention to restore peace; that the Communist student organisation—and the Communist Press—had been accusing the March 22 group of adventurist tactics".

And with regard to Sri Sen's claim that the French C.P. brought the workers into action and into the occupation of factories and plants, *Link* gives the following report ".....The occupation of plants was largely local action by the workers. There was no call for a general strike by the trade union federations until May 21, and while the largest federation, the Communist-led C.G.T., warned party militants against allowing extremist students to lead them into provocative action, the Federation of the Left led by Mitterand called for Government resignation".

Neither the C. G. T. nor the leaders of the French Communist Party swung the

workers into action as claimed by Sri Sen. They had to trail behind the workers, and to save their own skin gave the call for a strike which had already become an accomplished fact on the initiative of militant trade union workers. No wonder the French C.P. was condemning the actions of students and workers as "provocations of the extremists." The revolutionary 'vanguard' of Sri Sen was as much afraid of the revolution as the French bourgeoisie.

In the situation a good section of militant workers looked elsewhere for leadership. This was a logical consequence of the role played by the French Communist leadership. According to Sri Sen this is "utternonsense". Only anarchists and Trotskyites say this. According to him, if the workers were asking for an alternative leadership and felt betrayed by the C.P., why did they not make a bonfire of *Le Humanite* or smash the offices of the French Communist Party. And since they did not do so, it follows ipso facto that they continue to support the leadership of the French Communist Party led by Waldech-Rochet.

The other half of Sri Sen's article is a tirade against anarchists, and Trotskyites. Critics of the French Communist Party are anarchists. "Anarchism appeals to the petty bourgeoisie students and the inexperienced youth".

Then he goes on to display his knowledge of history. He talks of Marx's fight against Bakunin, of what Lenin said when his anarchist brother Alexander was hanged by the Czar, of how the great Stalin fought against the anarchism of Trotsky, etc. And hailing these vanquished all critics of the French Communist Party, Sri Sen slides into an euphoric mood and does a bit of pipe-dreaming. He sees the vision of "a world bringing morrows of song", he hears the tread of the iron battalions of the proletariat (incidentally, Sri Sen likes this expression very much; he used it in exactly the same way in his last article attacking Regis Debray in *Mainstream*); he sees

Karl-Marx walking the streets of Paris, hand in hand with Waldech-Rochet.

Sri Sen has all freedom to indulge in pipe-dreaming—a

most harmless occupation.

But invectives and bombasts are no substitutes for argument.

Delhi

Lajpat Rai

LESSONS FROM FRANCE

I have read with interest Sri Mohit Sen's article, "France : Old and New Myths" (*Mainstream*, June 22, 1968).

I do not belong to Sri Sen's party, CPI. Because, my attachment so long has been to CPI-M. Therefore it is expected that we may not see eye to eye with each other on any evaluation of the recent upheaval in France. I do not agree with Sri Sen that the CP of France was correct all along the line. For instance, the French Communist leadership at the beginning did not grasp the explosive nature of the situation touched off by the first round of student-police clash in Paris. It was only when the wave touched the workers in the Renault factory that the Communist leadership promptly woke up. This itself proved (a) that the French Communist influence on the students is negligible ; and (b) that the French Communists react immediately on any issue that touches the working class.

From this point onward the tussle came out sharp and clear between the Communists and the Anarchists. The anarchists in this case comprised the old Trotskyites, the pro-Mao fringe in the French Left, the admirers of The Guevara and other impetuous idealists who confuse militancy with revolutionary action. In this tug-of-war between Communists and the anarchist front, I have no doubt that Sri Mohit Sen is right when he says: Anarchism appeals to the petty-bourgeois students and the inexperienced youth. It feeds upon their healthy anger, sense of adventure and desire to

change things overnight. And let it be said, it mirrors also the lack of stamina, of aim and the fear of organisation which also characterise the student and the inexperienced youth." (Here one has to distinguish between stamina and spirit of abandon. Stamina implies tenacity of purpose, and its lack does not necessarily mean cowardice.)

The assessment of the situation on the part of the youth leadership was that the State power could be seized by the type of actions that they had launched *spontaneously*, without any organization. If we study the French disturbances dispassionately, we find that the state machinery of coercion was used much less than what we see it being used often in this country, say, against the recent West Bengal popular upsurge against P. C. Chosh's puppet Ministry. By the time the French army was alerted, the youth agitation fizzled out, and on the very marrow of de Gaulle's ban on seven extremist organisation, the youth leadership formally withdrew their campaign. Had it been a really revolutionary movement, a Government ban could not possibly have suppressed it so easily. This is borne out by our own experience in this country.

More serious is the totally wrong perspective of the youth leadership. It talked of revolution, depending entirely on spontaneity. The French election results have clearly shown that the overwhelming majority of the French people were not prepared for the revolutionary overthrow

of de Gaulle. By their adventurist antics, the extremist leadership only played into the hands of reactionaries, who by raising the cry of defence of the Republic against Red menace could confuse and hoodwink the people.

This has always been the fate of extremist adventurism. On a small scale we could see the same thing from our own experience. The Naxalbari ultra-revolutionaries had no organisation worth the name. But by their heroics, they only added grist to the reactionaries' mill; the Naxalbari episode provided an excellent diversionary move for the reactionaries to undermine the United Front Government in West Bengal. In France, the youth heroes' revolutionary stunts only provided a handle to de Gaulle to attack the Left and romp home to victory with a much bigger majority. Objectively the Cohn-Bendit outfit has strengthened de Gaulle's position; and it is objectivity, and not high-strung phrase-mongering, that serious revolutionaries have to bother about.

A new phrase has been brought into vogue during this episode. We find some of the supra-revolutionary whisky-sodden intellectuals branding the Communist Party as being part of the Establishment: this one could hear not only in Paris and Prague but even in Calcutta. This reminds one of Kropotkin's anarchist outburst against Marxist concept of dictatorship of the proletariat: "the idea of dictatorship is nothing more nor less than the pernicious product of governmental fetishism." It was against this non-class theory Stalin carried on a withering ideological campaign. A revolutionary should be intelligent enough to distinguish between the Establishment of vested interests and the Establishment of revolutionary leadership. (Many of us in CPI-M have expressed our dissatisfaction with the present Soviet leadership for not coming out in a massive way in support of revolutionary movements in different parts of the world; but that does not mean that Moscow has become an Establishment of reactionary

movements in different parts of the world: but that does not mean that Moscow has become an Establishment of reactionary vested interests, as Peking Radio tries to propagate. In fact, our complaint with Moscow is that it must come out more and more as the General Staff of the world revolution, and not that it has struck a deal with U.S. imperial-

ism to rule the world.)

The French upheaval was no doubt picturesque and meteoric, but it lacked the sustenance of a revolutionary movement: neither the objective reality nor its organisational position warranted that its objective should be pitched higher than winning of immediate demands of students and workers. Anger by itself is not an index of revolutionary

stamina. Trying to tell this home truth, the French Communists had to face the slander of being tailist, and in the final analysis, it is they who will have to bear the brunt of the De Gaullist offensive. The French episode has much to teach the Indian Left, with its own quota of anarchist adventurers.

Calcutta

D. Gupta

NEW FOCUS ON ASIA

(Continued from Page 8)

though stifled, has voiced concern at the continuation of Badaber base, and has demanded that the ten-year agreement for it due to expire this year, must not be renewed. Also some press reports in USA have almost given the impression that the base agreement would not be renewed for another ten years.

It is true that Pakistan with her present anxiety to develop better relations with China and the Soviet Union, would like to be saved from the embarrassment of having to host Gary Power's colleagues and friends, but Badaber is too valuable for the Pentagon to be lost so easily.

With the approach of the time for renewal of the Badaber base agreement, a noticeable change in the US policy towards arms supply to Pakistan is evident. Last September onward, Washington for sometime could not make up its mind about supplying tanks to Pakistan via Belgium and Italy. The Pakistan demand was stalled for the time being, on grounds of "technical" difficulties.

Significantly, such "technical" difficulties were overcome on the eve of the negotiations for the renewal of the agreement for Badaber. A third-party transaction is understood to have been finalised for Pakistan getting 200 US M7 tanks at a moderate price from Belgium. Another 100 of such tanks are due to come to Pakistan from Italy. There are also reports that West Germany is also ready to sell NATO tanks to Pakistan. Despite all the propaganda smoke-screen by pro-US circles, no responsible

elements in Washington would rule out that the US authorities may have themselves managed to arrange to route such military assistance for Pakistan.

Pak Ambassador's List

In fact, in the middle of May, Pakistan Ambassador in USA met an important US State Department official and handed over a list of weapons which Rawalpindi would like to get from USA. The list is believed to include many highly-sophisticated arms; nevertheless, the Pakistan Ambassador was assured that his request would be considered with utmost understanding.

Naturally, such understanding would demand quid pro quo bargaining for the continuation of the Badaber base. What has surprised many in Washington is that the Government of India has lodged no protest worth the name, to warn the US authorities that the continuation of the Badaber base itself is regarded by India as an unfriendly act against her, since its intelligence activities directly affect India's sovereignty and integrity.

With the shrinking in American prestige over Vietnam and the widening Indo-US differences over the Israeli aggression in West Asia, the US authorities naturally feel that they have almost lost the initiative in the Indian political scene—the initiative which two years ago had enabled them to force devaluation of the rupee and considerable inroad into this country's economic policy in such vital sectors as food and

fertilizer. Today the scene has very considerably shifted: the Soviet initiative in coming to the aid of recession-hit industries in India, opens up, according to US calculations, rather disturbing prospects for both the Wall Street and the White House. The campaign against the Soviet offer to purchase Indian wagons—launched by that dedicated Washingtonian, Sri S. K. Patil—is not to be regarded as a normal anti-Communist exercise. It has ominous nuances which are often kept away from public view.

USAID Move

During the recent aid-India consortium meeting, reports were leaked out that the US frowned upon India selling to the Communist bloc goods which were manufactured with components supplied from the West. What has however not yet been publicised is that the USAID authorities recently have been objecting to India buying sophisticated weapons from the Soviet Union. The objection is believed to have been raised on the strength of the Symington-Conti Amendment. The objective is to debar dollar aid on the excuse that India is buying defence equipments from the Communist countries. The USAID authorities are obviously trying the usual blackmail that India's closer ties with Moscow would offend the US Congress and thereby the prospect of aid would be blighted.

June 26, 1968

RIGHT APPROACH, WRONG METHOD

Hindustan Ke Musalman Kya Kare by Zafar Imam (Published in New Delhi, 1968, by Musalmanon Ka Socialist Centre)

THE Muslim in India lives in doldrums. In most cases he belongs to the lowest rung of the social ladder. His sense of insecurity, however, leads him to withdraw himself into a closed world, jealously guarded by an opportunist leadership which offers him nothing but religious orthodoxy and an obscurantist social system. Politically, he is a suspect and he views with growing concern the gradual ascendancy of certain political forces in the country which demand either his extinction or his expulsion from India. Under these circumstances what should the Muslims do? This is a fairly loaded question and Dr Zafar Imam in this Urdu pamphlet, has indulged in some plain talking and some loud thinking. According to Imam the problems that the Muslims are faced with arise out of the insularity of this community from the mainstream of the national life. He spares no one—the Muslim leadership, for its class collaborationist policy, its opportunist line and its profession of obscurantist ideas; the Hindu leadership for its apathy, indifference and lack of vision; and the Hindu communal forces for their self-righteous bigotry. He does not plead for a second-

grade citizenship for the Muslims. He does not compromise with obscurantism. He calls for substantial reforms in the social system of the Muslims. Imam does not quote scriptures to prove his point. On the contrary, his appeal is essentially empirical.

The primary concern of Imam is the problem of insecurity. He has rightly exploded the widely accepted myth of the spontaneity of communal violence of the recent days. He is equally justified in emphasising the organised nature of communal riots. On the basis of Imam's experience in Indian politics and the attitudes of the different political parties towards the question of Muslims' interests, Imam concludes that the parties on the Left are essentially 'non-communal', and that of all the parties on the Left, the two Communist Parties are 'most secular'. Hence a recommendation for the Muslims to support and align themselves with the Communist Parties.

But is it all that simple? The confusion lies in treating the word 'Muslim' as a blanket term. Any organised efforts to disseminate socialist ethos and Marxist world-view among the masses of the Muslims ought to aim at disinfecting them from the opportunistic and conservative

leadership, and this would certainly involve a programme challenging the social, economic and ideological basis of Muslim orthodoxy and insularity. It has to be a class call. The Muslim may be drawn towards a socialist programme not because they belong to a minority community, not because the Communists have opted for a 'less' communal and 'more' secular postures than say, Swatantra Party; but because the bulk of the Muslim population in India belongs to the working class and its allies and that class-consciousness is the surest means to neutralise the disruptive pulls of various vertical loyalties.

Dr Imam's pamphlet is not tuned to this approach. Hence, despite all the practical air about it, the pamphlet contains a collection of pious conclusions charged with sincere but essentially untutored emotions. In fact, despite the "revolutionary" recommendations Imam has not been able to rise above the essential liberal trappings and his pamphlet gives no indications as to his affiliation to Marxian analysis. This is most remarkable. One wonders if his is the dilemma of a high-powered machine designed to move in circles.

And, yet it is heartening to note that an initiative has been taken by a group of young 'Muslims' along relatively progressive lines. As a pressure group this 'socialist' forum may do yeoman's service to the cause of Left movement in the country. It should not, however, aspire to emerge as a movement itself.

S. C.

CAN A COUNTRY HAVE MORE THAN ONE COMMUNIST PARTY?—II

(Continued from Page 12)

These "revolutionaries and true Communists" therefore, first repudiate the CPSU, as having become the betrayer of world revolution, the restorer of capitalism in the Soviet Union. Then they repudiate the unanimously agreed programme adopted in the Moscow Conference in 1960, and subscribe to the new Peking General Line of 1964 and then proceed to split the Communist Parties which do not agree to it. That is called truly following in the

footsteps of Lenin and Marxism-Leninism.

We will come to the ideological differences contained in the above argument later on. Just at present, once again, we shall limit ourselves to the organisational analogy and the reference to Lenin by the splitters. So let us see the facts of the situation at that time.

(To be Continued Next Week)

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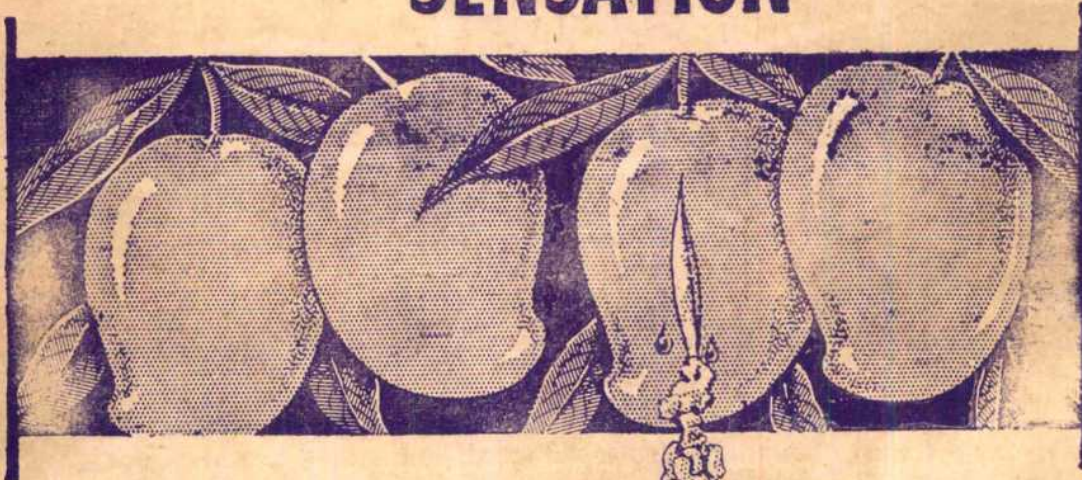
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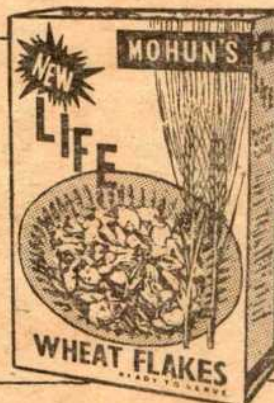
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WHO SHOULD BE THROWN OUT ?

SRI C.B. Gupta belongs to that group of State Congress bosses who are known to have close links with business houses and whose main function in the party is to prevent it from living up to its socialist and democratic pledges to the people. His hostility to the radical elements in the organisation is well known, even as that of Sri S. K. Patil, Sri Atulya Ghosh and other "bosses" is.

While the public will not feel at all surprised at his intemperate attack on Sri K. D. Malaviya, Sri Chandra Shekhar and other Left-leaning persons in the Congress, the central leadership of the party as well as the rank and file must seriously ponder over the fact that a so-called State leader of the party has had the temerity to ask the believers in socialism to quit and to describe the AICC's Ten-Point programme as so much "tall talk." They should earnestly consider whether the Congress is to continue to be a plaything in the hands of confessed reactionaries of the type of Sri Gupta or an instrument for the advancement of the people's interests.

Congressmen should in fact make up their minds whether it is the radical elements that should quit the party, or those avowedly or otherwise the agents of Big Business and other vested interests. If

the radicals are to go, the Congress should plainly abandon its socialist slogans and accept the Swatantra platform; if they are to stay and the party is to carry out its promises, Sri Gupta and Company must be made to understand that they have no place in it. So long as the Congress maintains its double-faced character, mouthing progressive slogans on the one hand and tying itself to the apron-strings of vested interests and their brazen agents on the other, the kind of situation that has developed in UP is bound to continue and worsen.

There are many outside the Congress who believe with ample justification, that the radical elements in the party are fighting a losing battle against the entrenched bosses whose record of corruption and whose links with the private sector and the rural rich are notorious. But it has to be recognised that if these radical elements have not given up the struggle, it is because they continue to possess a burning faith which induces the hope that the Congress can somehow be brought back to the path chalked out for it by Jawaharlal Nehru.

Sri Gupta's inability to secure support for his move to expel Sri Malaviya can well be taken by the radical section as indication that their faith is not entirely misplaced. But the fact remains that it is the bosses who, by virtue of their connections with sources of finance and because of the kind of support built up for themselves through corrupt practices over the years, occupy the dominant position in the organisation in the States, and by reason of this at the central level also.

The Congress having largely lost its ethos and its identity with the poor masses of India, the task of ridding it of anti-socialist elements and making it a genuine party of the people is not going to be easy. Those Congressmen in the leadership and in the rank and file who believe this should be done, must necessarily consider the introduction of drastic economic measures which alone can make the position of reactionaries in the party untenable and force them out. Unfortunately there are as yet no indications that the courage, vision and capacity to initiate such measures are available. In fact, it is the inability of Congressmen in power to implement even the modest Ten-Point programme laid down by the AICC that has encouraged a power-mad politician like Sri Gupta to sneer at the programme as "all talk."

It is not unknown either to the party's top leadership or to the rank and file that the Congress

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bosses in the States, including Sri Gupta, have done nothing about the innumerable charges of corruption and misuse of power levelled against them and their colleagues. On the other hand, West Bengal Congress boss Atulya Ghosh has been able to secure the selection as candidates for the mid-term elections of many persons with black records. Some of them are men accused of various malpractices; and some are known as rank communalists.

Thus a situation has developed in which neither the party's national leadership nor its rank and file are in a position to prevent the perpetuation of corrupt practices or the continuing domination of vested interests and their agents.

The Congress is not the private property of Sri Gupta, Sri Patil and others of that ilk. The radical

section, which basis its attitude on the professed ideals of the party, has greater right to be in it than those whose main ambition is to undermine these ideals and make the Congress a tool in the hands of Big Business and the rural rich. The latter have indeed succeeded in large measure in their nefarious aims, especially in the last decade. But that only makes the task of radical Congressmen more urgent than ever. It is possible that the Left in the Congress may ultimately lose and the party may become totally subservient to the vested interests. But while the radical elements fight they deserve the sympathy and support of the common people and of the parties and groups who aim at ending the stranglehold of entrenched interests on the nation's economic life.

New Delhi Skyline

MOSCOW-NEW DELHI-RAWALPINDI

In less than twenty-four hours after the Soviet Charge d' Affaires delivered on Saturday Mr Kosygin's message to Smt Indira Gandhi intimating Moscow's lifting of the self-imposed embargo on the sale of arms to Pakistan, there was a perceptible change in New Delhi's political skyline.

Despite the conscious efforts on the part of the South Block to keep the reactions strictly restrained one could notice even on Sunday evening the unmistakable signs of serious thinking bordering on anxiety about the likely repercussions of the latest Kremlin decision with regard to Pakistan. For, one has to take into account the fact that during the last twenty-one years since Independence, the Indo-Pak animosity has to a very large measure been the decisive factor in diplomacy and defence of both Rawalpindi and New Delhi. Specifically, on the question of arms supply, the overwhelming body of opinion

in this country regards the Pak military build-up as a matter of direct concern for India's defence.

Judging by normal standards of international relations, this approach might seem baffling to an outside observer: how could a country of the size of India be menaced by a small country like Pakistan and that too split into two halves? This a question which even friendly circles have often been found to be asking abroad. Logic demands that the reality should be the other way round.

And yet the historical reasons for India's misgivings about Pakistan as a threat to her own security can hardly be ignored. The very fact that the overwhelming bulk of Indian opinion looked upon the Partition of 1947 as a clever British-inspired manoeuvre, so that through the politically-weaker Pakistan, the West could retain a foothold in this strategically important sub-continent, conditioned Indian

attitude on the morrow of Independence. And this attitude was hardened when the attack on Kashmir was accompanied by the chorus of Western support on the side of Pakistan.

The antipathy towards Pakistan was reinforced further when in 1954, she was drawn into the network of US military alliances and thereby officially became a watchdog of the Pentagon. The warnings given by Nehru at that time that the free gift of US arms to Pakistan would only encourage her to go in for adventurist action against India turned out to be true during the conflict of 1965. The manner in which Rawalpindi joined hands with Peking very soon after the Chinese attack on India in 1962 also helped to strengthen the widely-held Indian suspicion—not confined to Hindu communalist circles alone—that Pak rulers would never fail to exploit any and every difficulty facing this country.

It is against the background of this dominant mood of distrust

that one has to understand the almost automatic resentment at Pakistan having managed to persuade Moscow to relent and sell arms to her.

THERE is however little reason for New Delhi to be surprised at the latest Soviet decision. Since President Ayub's first visit to Moscow early in 1965, a perceptibly new Soviet approach towards Pakistan did not escape New Delhi's notice. In fact, it was Smt Gandhi, then a member of the Shastri Cabinet, who was the first Indian VIP to convey to New Delhi her impressions of this new Soviet approach. The question did figure in subsequent Indo-Soviet summit meetings of the next two years. The Soviet leaders took the stand that (a) no arms had so far been given to Pakistan; (b) that they would keep New Delhi informed of any new policy decision on this point; and (c) that nothing would be done by Moscow towards Pakistan at the cost of India.

When Air Marshal Noor Khan visited Moscow last year, the pressing demand for arms was somehow warded off by the Soviet offer of non-lethal material such as trucks and helicopters.

Three months ago after Mr Kosygin's flying visit on the way back from Rawalpindi, New Delhi did notice that in reply to anxious queries with regard to Pakistan's insistence on purchasing Soviet arms, the Soviet Prime Minister gave the cryptic assurance that nothing would be done at the cost of Indo-Soviet understanding. By the time General Yahya Khan's mission left for Moscow, careful observers in New Delhi were almost certain that the Soviet embargo on selling arms to Pakistan might no longer be enforced. And last week Sri Dinesh Singh was understood to have brought back the same impression from Moscow.

It was thus no bolt from the blue for New Delhi. And yet it was a jolt which too has its historical roots. Indo-Soviet relations in the last two decades have grown in such an extraordinary fashion that there were hardly any

unexpected twists or turns in it. Even when the warmth of the post-Stalin era had not been felt, the Soviet position in the Security Council had been to befriend Indian stand, and New Delhi could always depend on Moscow's veto to ward off any new Western machinations over Kashmir in favour of Pakistan.

Then came Mr Khrushchov's historic Srinagar declaration in 1955 about the finality of Kashmir's accession to India. Side by side, Pakistan's membership of the US military alliances was an openly provocative action which culminated in 1960 in Gary Powers' spy plane taking off from Peshawar and brought down by Soviet missiles: that was the highwater mark of Pak-Soviet animosity.

Soon after came the Soviet stand in favour of India against the Chinese attack—which belied the calculations of even hard-boiled Soviet baiters—followed by the massive Soviet military aid to India since 1964.

All these had created in New Delhi an almost unreal smugness that the Soviet friendship could be taken for granted. Even during the hey days of pro-American euphoria under the Aoka Mehta-Subramaniam dispensation when the rupee was devalued at the behest of the World Bank two years ago, there was no lack of accommodation on the part of Moscow in providing economic or military assistance.

Obviously Indo-Soviet relations once again began to look up from the summer of last year when the forthright Indian stand against Israeli aggression marked the assertion of New Delhi's foreign policy untrammelled by Western pressures. The depth of Indo-Soviet understanding was demonstrated at the time of Mr Kosygin's visit this year when he agreed with the New Delhi stand in favour of step-by-step detente in Indo-Pak cold war instead of putting the priority on the Kashmir dispute. It is against this background that Moscow's decision to lift the ban on the sale of arms to Pakistan—a normal transaction between two friendly countries—has produced

the excitement it has in this country.

IN the prevailing excitement, one comes across the tendency to equate the present Soviet decision with the US military supply to Pakistan in the mid-fifties. Although in the context of the prevailing mood of Indo-Pak confrontation any fresh advantage for Pakistan to buy even a single rifle is resented in this country, one would be wrong to overlook the difference between the Soviet and the American approach to Pakistan with her arms stock. In 1954, Pakistan's entry into US military alliances turned her into an American arms depot; and for all that arsenal, Pakistan did not have to spend anything. The free supply of arms in such abundant quantity by itself whetted Pakistan's military appetite. In contrast, the present Soviet decision only provides Pakistan with the opportunity to buy arms—an opportunity which is obviously limited by her capacity to purchase. If the US military alliance dumped an enormous supply of arms within the very gates of Pakistan, the latest Kremlin decision only entitles Pakistan to enter the Soviet arms market and not to get hold of a big chunk of it free of cost. With all the advantages that it may have opened up for Rawalpindi—more political than military—Moscow by its latest decision presumably can maintain a greater control over flow of arms into Pakistan than Washington could under the system of massive arms build-up which the US military alliances provided; at least that is one of the Soviet considerations at the moment.

There is another point of contrast between the two. When the US managed to inveigle Pakistan into its own military alliance, Dulles branded India's policy of non-alignment as "immoral"; US also at the same time did its best to block India's programme of defence production with the result that American contribution to India's defence projects is insignificant, and India did not get any concession or relief from the

US with regard to the heavy foreign exchange drain for defence purchases from the West.

In contrast, the Soviet Union's massive military supply to India on rupee payment has been synchronised with a wide-ranging programme of assistance for defence production from MIG to missiles. Incidentally, Moscow's persistent objection to publicising its defence aid to India has kept the public in the dark about the magnitude of Soviet defence assistance to this country. The latest in our acquisition of sophisticated Soviet arms is the first submarine of the Indian Navy.

Authoritative circles can also vouch for it how during the last five years our major source of defence supplies has been the Socialist world with the Soviet Union taking the lead.

That Moscow's withdrawal of the ban on sale of arms to Pakistan does not in any way mark a shift in its policy of defence assistance to this country was highlighted last Saturday, when along with the oral message from Mr Kosygin arrived the Soviet Prime Minister's signed letter to Smt Gandhi assuring her that all the requirements requested for the next two years by India would be duly met by the Soviet Union.

* *

WITH the experience of three armed conflicts with Pakistan, Indian opinion is naturally anxious to understand the calculations on which the present Soviet policy towards Pakistan is based. The fact that Pakistan has not yet left SEATO and CENTO enjoins upon her at least formally the mission of fighting Communism, as John Foster Dulles had conceived it. What then is the basis of this newly-found Soviet hope to influence her politics along friendly directions, it is being asked in New Delhi today.

Moscow's world assessment makes it clear that the Dulles dream of US hegemony through the military alliances has been badly shattered in recent years; its progressive decline has been marked by the awakening in the Afro-Asian world.

In this context, Pakistan's recent foreign policy moves, par-

ticularly under President Ayub, gain significance. Pakistan's reservations about the US policy in Vietnam is well-known. The very fact that Pakistan has made a breakthrough from the US military-alliance containment and has established close relations with China should in the present Soviet view be regarded both as an opportunity and a danger. On the one hand, it signifies the inability of Washington to cordon off Pakistan from the Communist world; on the other, it provides a fresh pasture for China in a strategically-placed neighbour of the Soviet Union, the China which under Mao brands revisionist Moscow as its implacable enemy. The urgency of forcing a political opening into Pakistan was evident in Moscow.

The Indo-Pak conflict of 1965 saw striking Soviet initiative in an area which the West had so long tried to keep as its own diplomatic preserve. Mr Kosygin's diplomatic triumph at Tashkent brought the need of cultivating Pakistan on the Soviet agenda. And from then on the main stumbling for Soviet overtures to Rawalpindi was the incessant complaint that while Moscow went on arming India, it placed a ban on Pakistan buying Soviet arms. To buttress its own claim, Rawalpindi was not slow to complain that it was the Soviet arms which was used on a large scale by India in her conflict with Pakistan in 1965. It is in this context that the decision to let Pakistan buy Soviet arms was made. The argument in support of it has been that by this gesture, Moscow would gain a political foothold in Pakistan: this would counteract both the American and Chinese influences at Rawalpindi, it is claimed. It is possible for instance that the US syp base at Badaber near Peshawar may had be closed down.

Is this calculation valid? It is precisely on this point that New Delhi is sceptical about Moscow's expectations from its new policy towards Pakistan. The current US worry at Moscow making headway into Pakistan seems to strengthen the Soviet calculation. Many questions are however being

raised on this point. For one thing, the quantum of the Soviet arms to Pakistan if it is to be low—as Moscow has been assuring New Delhi—may have no impact on Pakistan's policy; in other words, with token aid, the Soviet Union may not be in a position to influence Pak policy.

Secondly, the Chinese have already made considerable headway into Pakistan: Peking has offered a full-fledged ordnance factory to be set up in East Pakistan. China's interest in holding on to Pakistan has a double objective: to hold on to the Soviet Union's soft underbelly, and at the same time to harass India; it is therefore unlikely that Peking will let her grip over Pakistan be loosened very easily.

Thirdly, according to New Delhi's prevailing assessment, no Establishment in Pakistan has so far thrived without a hate-India policy. For, this has always provided an excellent diversion for all internal unrest. So, the argument runs, it will be idle to expect Rawalpindi responding to the Soviet implorings for Indo-Pak rapprochement after having wangled to get Soviet arms.

It is thus a case of two sets of assessment of the same phenomenon—Moscow's and New Delhi's, each confident about the validity of its own. History however will be the final judge in such matters, and no power, big or small, can claim to be always infallible. In responsible quarters in New Delhi, there is serious effort to understand Moscow's approach, even if there are differences over it. And this is helped by the Prime Minister's very first public comments on this new development; while expressing concern over Pakistan having a new opening for getting arms, on the very same day, she categorically stated that there would be no question of any change in India's policy towards the Soviet Union. It is in adherence to this stand that President Zakir Hussain is proceeding on his Soviet tour: frank exchange of views, with the mutual efforts to convince each other on an assessment over which there is difference of opinion.

* *

JUDGING by New Delhi's reactions, one is tempted to say that more than the danger on the defence front, concern is felt in the Capital over the impact of the Soviet decision on the political front inside the country.

A significant feature of the current reactions is that the Defence authorities are much less perturbed than perhaps the political wing of the Government. The *sang froid* which is noticed in both the Defence Minister and the Defence Secretary may be due to the fact that they know more than anybody else the enormous quantum of Soviet military aid to this country—and that this cannot be materially offset by a small quantity of Soviet arms reaching Pakistan. It is pointed out, for instance, that both India and Pakistan have purchased the aircraft Mirage, but nobody can blame the French authorities for having heightened the danger of war.

There is also a belief in these quarters that Moscow is interested in keeping up the stability of this sub-continent, and so, the Soviet policy would strive its

utmost to see that there is no disturbance of the prevailing equilibrium through any military adventurism.

This objectivity is conspicuously absent in a large section of political opinion in the Capital. Leaving aside the professional anti-Soviet elements like Sri Masani or Sri Balraj Madhok, one finds a lot of excitement among the Prime Minister's critics inside the Congress Parliamentary Party itself. The occasion is likely to be exploited by them to "prove" that her foreign policy has been based on the illusion of sentimental Soviet support for good. Factional knives are being sharpened for the purpose and one would not be surprised if a big move is made to discredit Smt Indira Gandhi's present standing by a section of her own partymen on the eve of the monsoon session of Parliament. The US lobby is also naturally expected to take advantage of the situation; this will be fully known when the Katzenbach mission arrives in New Delhi later in the month.

At the same time, one comes

across in the Capital quiet and sober thinking over the problem posed by this new development. A school of thought has been slowly growing in the Foreign Office which is keen on making determined efforts for a *detente* with Peking as a counterblast to Pakistan. It is likely that this school may gain ground in the coming weeks. There is also a line of thinking that favours more diversification in arms purchase, and it is likely that this trend will be strengthened in the coming period. A new sense of realism thus seems to be slowly coming over our approach to Defence and Foreign Policy.

All this however depends on a more informed and objective approach to the complex problems facing this nation in the world. For a correct way forward, we cannot afford to stick to old digits of understanding. The fast-changing reality of today can be grasped not by passionate outbursts but by a severely objective approach to friends and adversaries alike.

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CPI and Jana Sangh

C. N. CHITTA RANJAN

DURING last year's communal disturbances in some parts of the country, particularly Bihar, the Communist Party of India and its spokesmen did not hesitate to charge the Jana Sangh and the RSS with responsibility for them. At the recent meeting of the National Integration Council in Srinagar, CPI's Bhupesh Gupta frankly named the Sangh and the RSS in connection with communal propaganda and activity; he was the only one, apart from Smt Subhadra Joshi of the Congress, to do so, the other participants at the meeting having been reluctant to offend the representative of the Jana Sangh who was present.

In the coalitions in which it participated along with the Sangh, the CPI invariably found itself placed in an embarrassing position, the notable example being UP where the Sangh, occupying a dominant position in the coalition, made use of office to strengthen the hold of communal elements in the administrative apparatus. Although the Sangh was not very strong in the Bihar coalition, it succeeded in creating endless problems for the CPI's secular conscience. Often enough the CPI found itself unable to fight communalism as effectively as it should have because of association with the Sangh in such coalitions or because of alliance with it in the Opposition. There has indeed been some evidence of serious rethinking of the attitude to the Sangh on the part of the leadership of the CPI.

In this background, CPI General Secretary Rajeswara

Rao's statement last week that his party is being "forced to unite" with for Jana Sangh in coalition governments by the SSP and other Leftist parties makes rather strange reading. The truth is that in the period before the Fourth General Election, when the "anti-Congress" sentiment was at fever pitch, the CPI did not think it wise to be left out of the Fronts formed on that basis, and accepted alliance with the Jana Sangh and other such organisations as a necessary evil for the purpose of ending the Congress monopoly of power. At that time the CPI preferred discretion to valour, and considered such alliance a tactical necessity. The wisdom of such alliance with reactionary parties may indeed be questioned, but to do so now will not only be considered unfair but will be dismissed as a futile exercise in retrospective speculation.

But Sri Rajeswara Rao's thesis can surely be examined in the context of the events of the sixteen months since the General Election. The very first question that has to be answered is whether alliance with reactionary parties, particularly the Jana Sangh, has helped to strengthen the Left anywhere in the country. The record shows that it is not so; on the other hand, wherever the Leftist parties have sought to impart respectability to communal and reactionary parties by alliances with them, it is these latter parties that have gained in strength. The Jana Sangh because of the alliances has gained more seats than it would otherwise have, while the Leftist parties have not improved their position very much.

So far as sharing of power is concerned, UP has shown that once the Sangh gains a sizeable number of seats and is in a position to have leverage in the Government, it will use the power so secured for partisan ends and to the detriment of the collective strength of the coalition in which it is a partner. In Bihar it was demonstrated that the Sangh is capable of causing acute embarrassment to its secular partners by its conduct outside the Government.

It is not only in relation to minority communities that the Sangh has created problems for its partners of the Left; being a party of certain specific vested interests, the Sangh has always tried to prevent the introduction of progressive measures. We have seen this happen even in Punjab, not to speak of the States in which it was one of the strongest elements in the coalition. There can be no doubt that the Sangh's attitude and activities were among the major reasons for the weakening of the United Fronts in at least some of the States.

It may be true that the SSP leadership prefers hobnobbing with the Sangh and even adopting some of its narrow slogans in the belief that by so doing the hold of the Sangh can be weakened. It may be that the SSP and some others insist on alliance with the Sangh in view of their continuing but untenable adherence to the "anti-Congress" stance. But to say that because of all this the CPI feels "forced" to tie itself to the Jana Sangh is to admit that the CPI does not feel strong enough to stand up resolutely for the basic principles

on which its ideology is based. The concept of a national democracy surely does not mean alliance with reactionaries who are bent upon undermining the very concept of a socialist state?

The Jana Sangh has not made a secret of its aims, and so no one can claim to have been kept in ignorance of its real objectives. Even after the Srinagar meeting its organs have carried material calculated to spread disaffection between religious communities in the country. Its spokesmen have made it plain enough that in their view non-Hindus are second-class citizens who must satisfy the Hindu communalists of their "loyalty". The Jana Sangh's "guru" has come out with a call for "polarisation" of forces in the country: his call is clearly one for communal and other vested interests joining hands against the forces of socialism and secularism, and it is equally clearly meant as a directive to the Jana Sangh on the line it should pursue in future.

What Is The Compulsion?

In these circumstances, what should be the attitude of the CPI? Sri Rajeswara Rao has said that the inclusion or non-inclusion of the Jana Sangh in United Fronts "does not depend on us." There is no doubt that in regard to the formation of United Fronts a certain measure of flexibility is necessary in the present context. But what is the extent to which one will bend over backwards to achieve a so-called United Front? And what will such a Front be united on? If it is granted that the CPI is not anxious to occupy the seats of power at all costs without even being sure of being able to do something positive in the public interest, it becomes difficult to understand why the CPI leadership should feel "forced" to accept the Jana Sangh as a partner in such Fronts. The only compelling factor for acceptance of alliances in a situation such as ours today can be that such alliances can clearly lead to united and effective functioning as a team *on the basis of a common understanding of the socio-economic needs of the masses*. On this

score there is nothing in common between the CPI and the Sangh. What then is the compulsion? And why the feeling of helplessness which Sri Rajeswara Rao pleads?

The suspicion is inescapable that the CPI leaders, or at any rate some of them, are afraid to face the prospect of being "left out." The question they have to consider seriously now is whether it is necessary to be "in" at any price. Experience has shown that being "in" does not mean much so long as the Left is not able to use power to further the cause of the common people. If the Leftist parties can work out a formula by which they can act unitedly on specific popular demands, not being in the seats of power cannot weaken them; on the other hand, the building up of a united mass movement on a national scale for the achievement of popular demands may conceivably strengthen them. Office today is not an end in itself; if it cannot serve as a means to the ends the CPI and other Leftist parties have in view, it is certainly not worth achieving. If office is to be considered the objective, alliance with the Devil himself may be pardonable. But it is not easy to believe that the CPI leaders look at things from this angle.

No Truck With Reactionaries

In a reference to Bihar, Sri Rao has said that the Jana Sangh came into the last United Front Government in that State because of the SSP's insistence, and he has justified the CPI's acceptance of this position by saying that "some such aberrations" are bound to come up in the task of uniting democratic forces. It is a rather facile explanation. In any case, one would think that each party would decide the question of alliances on the basis of its own principles and beliefs and not because of "insistence" by someone else.

For the future, Sri Rao has clarified that while making "adjustments" with parties like the Jana Sangh, the criterion should be whether by such tactics the unity of the Left forces can be

furthered. This observation appears to imply that Sri Rao has not learnt anything from experience. He should at least remember UP where it was not the Sangh which felt muzzled in the coalition government but only the Left forces. In Bihar, too, Sri Rao cannot claim on the basis of facts that the "tactics" of including the Sangh in the UF has furthered Left unity. What has happened is just the reverse. Sri Rao claims that in Bihar the CPI has been able to expose the Sangh's links with landlords and blackmarketeers. Having so exposed the Sangh, why does Sri Rao feel unable to say categorically and without qualifications that his party will have no truck with the communal, reactionary organisation in any circumstances?

While the CPI need not accept the extremist Naxalbari thesis of rejecting parliamentary democracy, it need not also go to the other extreme of seeking somehow to get into Ministries. The CPI's task in Parliament and the Legislatures is important no doubt, but its work outside parliamentary institutions is even more important. This is true of every Leftist party in the country today. Preoccupation with forging alliances for the sole purpose of defeating the Congress and installing United Fronts in office has in recent times prevented the Leftist parties from concentrating on the vital task of mobilising the masses in order to create a revolutionary atmosphere in the country and bring about a situation in which radical socio-economic changes will become inevitable. To the extent these tasks have been neglected the Leftist parties have grown weaker even in the last 16 months.

Sri Rao should also consider the fact that where principles considered basic were involved, the CPI was not afraid to face a split in its own ranks. Why then should it now feel afraid of refusing to have anything to do with communal and reactionary parties which are avowedly against the very policies and programmes for which the CPI stands? Sri Rao and other leaders of the CPI should serious-

ly consider whether efforts towards genuine Leftist unity on the basis of principles is not preferable to opportunistic alliances in the misleading name of United Fronts, which have proved to be instruments for weakening the Leftist forces and dividing them further.

It may also be worthwhile to remember that there was a time when members of minority communities looked hopefully towards the CPI and some of the other Leftist parties in the belief that these would uphold secular, democratic values at all costs. This faith among the forward-looking sections of the minority communities has been rudely shaken by Leftist alliances directly with the Jana Sangh and indirectly with the RSS. This is not the only loss; failure to place economic aims at the forefront has

brought about a loss of faith among large numbers of secular and forward-looking elements in the majority community also.

The drift of the Left parties, including the CPI, in the last year and more has led to frustration among those who had hoped that the Fourth Election would pave the way for the emergence of a strong united front of Leftist forces all over the country. Sri Rajeswara Rao would do well to realize that the CPI is on trial now: it is no use pleading that some other groups are "forcing" it to tie itself to the apron-strings of communal and reactionary parties. It is legitimately expected that the CPI with its background and its ideals will give a positive lead in the opposite direction.

What is "forcing" the CPI to accept alliance with the Jana

Sangh is not pressure from the SSP and other Left parties, but its own inability to make up its mind firmly on the basis of its opposition to forces that seek to divide the common people and divert attention constantly from the mobilisation of the masses for a united attack on vested interests and privilege of all kinds.

The need today is for a united front on the basis of common understanding of the radical social and economic changes the country needs if it is to get out of the grip of economic, communal, caste and other vested interests. It is on these lines that Sri Rajeswara Rao and his colleagues have to think; they should not feel obliged to justify costly mistakes by means of explanations of questionable validity.

Whither Nagaland?—VII

PANNALAL DAS GUPTA

SINCE we started this series on Nagaland, there has been a fierce gun-duel between the rebel Nagas and the Indian security forces. It took place near Kohima on June 7 last. In intensity and in the number of casualties on any one day, this battle has no precedent and it is quite likely that actual figures of the killed and injured on both sides have been suppressed.

Whatever that may be, we should try to understand the political significance of this incident, in the light of the analysis of the present situation in Nagaland given in the preceding

instalment of this report. We have shown that the Naga problem is not one of law and order and hence it cannot be solved by military or police action. This growing problem has to be dealt with and solved on the social, economic, political and psychological plane.

If the June 7 incident signifies a deliberate step or an initiative on the part of the rebels, it should be taken as indicative of their intention to end the ceasefire and start the hostilities afresh. But calm and dispassionate study of the subsequent developments would show that such fears are unfounded. It is not that their preparations have been completed, their alliance with China has been strengthened and therefore they are now "on to action".

Rather it seems that the

security forces had definite information and they took this action in the hope that by a surprise raid on a big rebel hide-out they could capture the rebels who had come back from China along with the Chinese arms. One of the terms of the ceasefire agreement is that the rebels shall not smuggle in arms, not only from China but from any country. Its counterpart term restricts the Indian army from making raids on the rebel camps.

How then are the security forces to make sure that the rebels are not importing arms from abroad violating the ceasefire agreement? In pursuance of their policy of blackmailing by arms and a possible armed seizure of power, rumours have been spread by the rebels them-

This is the concluding instalment of the report, whose previous instalments appeared in Mainstream, June 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 and July 6, 1968.

selves that large quantities of arms and ammunition have been and are still being imported from China and Pakistan. In the circumstances it is not possible for the security forces merely to keep guessing about the strength of the rebels and of the arms in their possession. The June 7 raid, therefore, may have been dictated by the compelling needs of such a probing, mixed with apprehension.

Conclusive evidence of the rebels' collusion with China is reported to have been found after the raid. The capture of Chinese arms, however, does not prove that these have been brought directly from China by the Nagas who have come back. It is equally likely that these were smuggled long ago through Pakistan: in fact these days arms bearing the markings of any country can find their way to any other country. It is from the evidence of the diaries and photographs seized that one has to come to a conclusion about the extent of the active alliance forged between the Chinese and the rebel Nagas.

Resolve of Abiding Ceasefire

The hideout in question, where long-range mortars and machine-guns were found, was located in a six-thousand-foot hill just a mile away from the headquarters of the Indian army and about six miles from Kohima. In recent history the Vietnam war has shown the effectiveness of ceaseless mortar fire—directed from hideouts—in destroying enemy positions, towns and ports. It would not be wrong to say that mortar is the main weapon of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese. It has eclipsed all other weapons in the Vietnam war.

If it is assumed that the rebels had set up their hideout so near to the Indian army headquarters in order, first, to destroy it by a mortar attack and then seize Kohima by a *coup de main*, the security forces can certainly justify the demolition of the rebel den. We who are outside and at a distance cannot pass an opinion supporting or discounting such a possibility. Only the rebels can say whether they had such a motive, and who knows

what is in their mind? In any event, they are not going to tell us. Rather they have been always trying to keep us guessing to be on tenterhooks. In plain language, the rebels cannot accuse the Indian army of violation of the ceasefire agreement, if, in the face of their provocations—threats, blackmailing tactics and surreptitious movements—the security forces had to go into action to smash their base.

As it transpired, it was not a declaration of war, but just an incident in an episode. Both sides—rebel and official—are reiterating their resolve of strictly abiding by the ceasefire terms. The Peace Observers' Team is also bending its energies toward the same end. A fresh initiative for holding an all-parties Naga Convention has come from the Naga Church Council. In short the recent clash of arms did not end in either party giving up the path of negotiations; rather both sides seem to have realized that there is no alternative to negotiations. The gun duel could not break the political stalemate, it only underlined the need for quickening the political process.

The possible political steps that can and should have been taken have already been discussed in the previous instalments of this report. The recent incident, instead of proving our analysis to be wrong, has further strengthened the arguments we have developed. This clash cannot be a desirable thing even for the pro-Chinese rebels (assuming that a group, fully committed to the Chinese, has already come into being). The correct strategy of guerilla war should be to escalate the conflict.

Legacy of Communalism

To us, the danger of this gradual widening of the area of armed conflict in Mizo Hills, Manipur and Tripura is more serious and significant than the latest clash in Nagaland. The extremist elements may take advantage of the deadlock reached 'over the hill tribes' (Khasi, Garo, etc) demand and the mounting tension caused by the resistance of the Assamese. If they do and succeed in starting

a running battle, the whole of North-East India may become the arena of a Chinese-type protracted revolution. Statesmanship demands that the flames of rebellion be fought and subdued politically.

It is not enough to reiterate the pledge to observe the ceasefire terms. The problem will not be solved if the exchange of fire stops in Nagaland. Nothing can be more self-deceptive than a smug complacency on the part of the politicians that there is no hurry, that things will be drifting as they are now, that the Nagas will get tired in the long run and give it up. The more the political process is quickened, the less there will be the room for use of arms. Conversely, the more the political solution is delayed on some pretext or other, the greater will be the danger of armed clashes and conspiracies spreading to all corners of North-East India.

Common Responsibility

The responsibility lies not only with the Government or the ruling party. It is a common responsibility of all the political parties. So far, it has been the headache of the ruling party (Congress) and the high officials. At its recent National Executive meeting at Gauhati, the Jana Sangh decided to have a finger in Naga pie and openly advocated a 'hawkish' policy. The party's stand—to treat the problem of North-East India as one whole and to pursue a single bold policy to arrive at single all-embracing solution—looks plausible enough at the first sight.

The political outlook of the Jana Sangh is Hindu imperialist—to transfer the legacy of Muslim and British imperialism to Hindu imperialism. To the Sanghites, the unity and integrity of India lies in the concentration of power at the Centre. They look upon the demand for greater autonomy for the State or that of the hill tribes for separate autonomous units as secessionist. Communalism, linguism, regional nationalism, etc., of various types have weakened Indian unity and therefore a 'bold policy' is needed—such a nation is gripping the

politically immature masses, especially the caste Hindus.

The recent clash in Nagaland is likely to tempt such people to turn away from the right path and take a wrong decision which will be suicidal. Out of anger and injured pride, the Indian people may take the same path that the extremists among the rebels have taken, just as they seek an answer to Muslim communalism in Hindu communalism. They will fail to see that there is a rift

in the rebel side, that "General" Kaito has started "arresting" the pro-Chinese rebels, that the ex-"Prime Minister" Kughato Sukhei has thrown a political challenge to these elements.

• If the Indian people overlook all these factors and become a prey to the Sanghite Hindu (Caste Hindu) imperialist propaganda, Indian unity may be broken to bits.

If the Jana Sangh alone were the purveyor of such ideas one

could afford to ignore them, but the fact is that in many parties there are covert supporters of a hawkish policy. To wean away the Nagas from the path of rebellion, we have first to purify our own minds and attitudes. By rediscovering the assimilating principle of India—for which the poet called her *Bharat-tirtha*—can we show the Naga path to be a path that leads them astray.

(Concluded)

WASHINGTON SCENE

Billions for Missiles and Pennies for Poverty

I. F. STONE

THE day the poor were driven out of Resurrection City was the day the Senate voted to approve an anti-missile system. Monday June 24 deserves to go down in history for its symbolic significance. Congress turned a flinty banker's face to the poor but took the first step toward the deployment of an ABM (anti-ballistic missile) network which could cost more than their most utopian demands. The first installment for Sentinel, the "thin" one, is \$5 billion. The total cost of the big one the military-industrial complex wants can easily run to \$50 billion. Even that is only the beginning. For the ABM will set off a new spiral in the arms race, as each side builds more missiles to overwhelm the other's anti-missiles, and then more anti-missiles to counter the new missiles. "And at the end of it all," as Nelson of Wisconsin told the Senate that day, the US and the Soviet Union "will be right back where we started,

except out of pocket \$50 to \$100 billion."

No Police Barred Them

While the Chief lobbyist of the poor, the Rev Ralph David Abernathy went to jail, the lobbyists of the military-industrial complex celebrated their biggest victory. The ABM will prove to be our most wasteful handout. But the lobbyists who sold this bill of goods did not have to live in shanties or confront police lines on their way to the Capitol. The clients of the welfare state ought to get acquainted with the clients of the warfare state. The decision to go ahead with the ABM, *Congressional Quarterly* said in a special study May 24 of the Military-Industrial Complex, will benefit more than 15,000 companies including such major defense contractors as General Electric, General Dynamics and Thiokol Chemical. One brokerage firm told its customers last summer that the day Congress approved the ABM was "the day they will shake the money tree for electronic companies." In the last quarter of 1967, after Johnson overruled

McNamara and approved the Sentinel, 75 mutual investment funds "sold \$90 million in other stock holdings (the CQ report says) and invested the proceeds in electronics."

The ABM is the latest breakthrough in the arms race and it is time to recognize the arms race for what it is—the socialism of the rich. It is the welfare system which supports some of our richest corporations. The physicist Ralph Lapp, who did so much to arouse the country to the fallout danger in the campaign against nuclear testing, has provided the best overall view of what the ABM and the arms race really mean in his new book, "The Weapons Culture." The spokesmen for the poor should use it as ammunition. Dr Lapp observed that the so-called free enterprise system "has been distorted into a kind of 'defense socialism', in which the welfare of the country is permanently tied to the continued growth of military technology and the continued stockpiling of military hardware." Dr Lapp estimates that since World War II the US has spent about one trillion dollars—1,000

This is taken from the well-known I. F. Stone's Weekly, published from Washington July 8, 1968.

billions or 1,000,000 millions—on armament! The programme has fallen like manna on the country club set and—with the related space programme—created a whole new generation of millionaires. We could have cleaned up every slum and solved every racial and social problem with a fraction of the money, thought and energy which went into military hardware, most of it already junked as obsolete.

As Soon As Solidarity Day Was Over

Solidarity Day brought a vast throng to Washington and half a dozen Establishment phonies hastened to address it from the Lincoln Memorial. But no occasional upsurge of benevolent feeling, much less spurious oratorical generalities about poverty, are going to change the allocation of resources between those who grow rich on weaponry and those who decay on welfare. The swift liquidation of Resurrection City once the visitors had departed was the reflection of a more permanent solidarity among those who fatten on the waste of national income. Those poor shanties the police destroyed were the first signs, we hope, of a widening and continued struggle against the inhumanity and the irrationality of our spending policy. During the House debate June 26 which ended with sharp cuts in the welfare budget, a typical Iowa Republican opponent of the poverty programme said the country did not have "money to throw away.....on this type of luxury" while a tightwad on the Democratic side (Flood of Pennsylvania) cried, "What do you want? Diamonds? What are you going to use for money? Cigar store coupons?" But when it comes to the war machine and the space programme the billions flow freely.

Mrs Green of Oregon protested that this same Congress had voted \$4 billion for the space programme. "That means," she said, "we are willing to spend more dollars for outer space than we are willing to spend in total amount of tax dollars for the education of 50 million boys and girls in our

elementary and secondary schools." But education, unlike the race for the moon, does not rain dollars on Houston, Texas. "It makes me heart-sick," Mrs. Green cried, "to see my nation spending in one day in Vietnam more than the total amount of increase I am requesting that affects 2 million teachers and the quality of education for 50 million boys and girls." It is not only the blacks nor only the poor who suffer from the huge allocations to the war and space machines. It is the quality of American life. Urban blight and pollution could be ended permanently for what that war in Vietnam has cost us. Abernathy's little army has been fighting a battle for all of us.

Resurrection City is supposed to have been a mess. I found it inspiring. It reminded me of the Jewish displaced persons' camps I visited in Germany after the war. There was the same squalor and the same bad smells, but also the same hope and the same will to rebuild from the ashes of adversity. To organize the hopeless, to give them fresh spirit, to set them marching was truly resurrection. If much went wrong, that was to be expected; what miraculous was that so much could be accomplished with the supposed dreg of our society. Disorganization is hardly a novelty in Washington; you can find it everywhere from Capitol Hill to the Pentagon. The striking thing about Resurrection City is that there was so much genuine non-racialism. The organizers have been given very little credit for bridging a gap everyone deplores. The Rev. Ralph David Abernathy is not the first man of God to be ridiculed and jailed. The wry humor of the poor he led was summed up for me by that touching sign on one of the mule wagons. "Don't Laugh Folks," it said, "Jesus Was A Poor Man." It would be tragic if their voices were so easily smothered.

Mules More Precious Than Men

The skewed vision which afflicts the respectable in our society was beautifully summed up in the outburst of concern for the

23 skinny mules that finally made it to Washington. The first edition of the *Washington Daily News* June 28 carried across its front page a picture of a mule in clover with a caption saying that the mules had been moved to pasture land in Columbia, Maryland, "where the meadows go for \$8000 an acre and their next-door neighbors are \$15,000 show horses and \$ 20,000 stallions. 'They're going to be treated better than any mules in the history of muledom,' one bountiful lady says." What of the poor hungry human mules who balked at their heavy burdens?

When the Vietnamese war causes inflation, the poor bear the burden in the shape of higher living costs; they eat less. When higher taxes are imposed and the budget cut to save the dollar from inflation, the poor pay again in the shape of fewer jobs and reduced welfare. And now that there is hope the Vietnam war may be ending and more funds available to help them, the Under Secretary of the Treasury tells a Town Hall audience in Los Angeles June 25 that he doubts the end of the war will bring any sizeable reduction in the military budget. Mr Barr estimated that "a cessation of hostilities would result in great pressure to rebuild stock in military supplies and equipment to a more acceptable level." He informs us that "We have been fighting this war on a very, very lean (only \$80 billion !) budget." How dare the poor be so obstreperous when the Pentagon is so hungry?

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Can A Country Have More Than One Communist Party?—III

S. A. DANGE

VII

30 The question before us is—when Lenin saw that the leadership of Second International had turned revisionist, that it had deserted Marxism and allowed its constituent parties to support their own bourgeoisie in the imperialist war and that it had thus failed to influence its own unanimous resolutions, what steps did he take?

Lenin first of all called upon the leaders of the International to carry out the resolutions already adopted and to ask all the parties to remain loyal to them.

But the International had no binding discipline inside its organisation. There was no such thing as democratic centralism either in the internal structure of the affiliated parties or in the International as a whole. Moreover the International had no functioning or directing centre as such, not even of the type which Marx provided in the days of the First International, when the development of Socialist Parties on a large scale had not yet taken place.

31. The next step was to gather together those parties or elements, who wanted to act according to the unanimous resolutions of the International and save the International from being totally engulfed by revisionism, and thus clear the path for a socialist revolution. The values of proletarian internationalism and the class-struggle had to be saved from being destroyed by the opportunism of the leadership.

As a result, many parties in the neutral countries held conferences and asked the International Socialist Bureau, that is the Central leadership of the International, to call a conference to decide the issue. But Chairman Vandervelde refused to do so and pleaded difficulties of functioning under war conditions as an excuse.

32. Then the opponents of the war and those who wanted to remain faithful to the resolutions of the International convened their conferences in Zimmerwald in September 1915, in which the initiative was taken by the Italian Socialist Party.

The first instalment of this thesis was published in Mainstream, June 1, and the second one in the issue of July 6, 1968. These two instalments covered the first six sections of the thesis.

The Zimmerwald Conference was attended by delegates of parties from seven countries, including all the three sections in the Russian Party that is the Bolsheviks, Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries. Minority opposition groups from Germany, France and Holland were also present.

A permanent "International Commission" was formed which held together the parties concerned in the unofficial bloc and received fresh affiliations. This Commission organised further conferences in Kienthal in 1916 and in Stockholm in September 1917. At the Kienthal Conference, Lenin proposed that a new International be now established but the Conference was not yet ready for such a break. Hence it was decided to defer the question. By the time of the Stockholm Conference the Russian Revolution was already on.

VIII

33 Thus it can be seen that at every stage, Lenin proceeded in a democratic way and not in an arbitrary sectarian way.

Let us see in what respects this approach of Lenin differs from the approach of the present-day splitters, who claim that they are fighting the modern revisionists in the Leninist way, assuming for a moment that those of us, who differ with these splitters, are revisionists and those whom we call splitters are Leninists.

In the present situation, as already stated, though there is no International organisation to split, there is the unanimous platform of 81 Parties' World Conference of 1960. If we are betraying it, as was done by the revisionists with regard to the resolutions of the Second International, those who claim to be Leninists should have called for the observance of the 1960 decisions and then having failed to secure that from us, they could have convened a conference of those who do not violate that agreed platform and wish to act on its basis for the furtherance of the world revolution and anti-imperialist struggles.

Did those who are fomenting splits, adopt such a course? They did not. But Lenin did.

The present day splitters are not fighting as Lenin did for the implementation of agreed resolutions. On the contrary they denounce those

resolutions and produce their own alternative platform.

34. Secondly, even their alternative platform is not arrived at as a result of any international conference or deliberations of those who want to save the world revolution from revisionism. It is not a platform, made by a single omniscient person, the wisdom of the infallible Mao Tse Tung.

Lenin called for a conference of those who wanted to remain loyal to the Stuttgart Resolution. And two such Conferences were held.

We, who are loyal to the decisions of the International World Conference, when attacked by the dissidents, ourselves reconvened the International Preparatory Committee in Budapest to discuss the differences and resolve them so as not to harm the revolution by schisms.

If the present day splitters wish to follow Lenin, why did they not attend this conference or are refusing to attend the next one?

So, the analogy of the Second International, the way Lenin fought the revisionists therein cannot help us in the present situation to solve the problems.

It cannot help us on international scale nor can it help us on the question of inner-party splits and problems, because the Second International had no such Communist Parties as we have today.

35. One more reference to the events of that period and to Lenin has to be brought on record. When Lenin moved at the Kienthal Conference that in view of the collapse of the leadership of the Second International, a new International be established and when that proposal was not accepted, he did not proceed unilaterally to the founding of the Third International. He waited for the situation to develop.

Lenin's line was being argued for three years. International conferences took place, and Commissions made up of delegates from several countries began to work out common understandings to take Marxism and revolution forward.

And even then, the Third (Communist) International came into being two years after the Russian Revolution, one year after the German revolution, and only when the outbreak of the revolutions in several countries had made it incumbent on the proletarian revolutionary forces to unite and clarify their position and provide a new world revolutionary centre and leadership for the new situation.

IX

36 Have the modern splitters anything in common with this history? They have nothing in common with these historical facts of the development of Marxism-Leninism.

The position, in fact, is exactly the reverse. It is we, who are denounced as "revisionists" are faithful to the main theoretical and ideological positions of the commonly agreed platform of 1960. It is we who are asking the dissidents to come to a new international world gathering to argue the differences and find a common ground for united action. It is we, who have refused to talk of "excommunicating" or excluding or expelling anybody from the world

forum of Marxism-Leninism. It is we who agreed to stop all open polemics on our differences. It is we who opposed splitting the world's Communist Parties. It is we who have remained faithful to Leninist norms.

So, the claim by the modern left sectarians and dissidents that they are behaving towards us as Lenin did towards the Second International is totally false. It is a perversion of history and nothing else.

37. Moreover, the irony of the situation is that Lenin actually had no need to "split" the International. It collapsed due to its own sins and the upsurge of the revolutions of that period.

Thus the conclusion is that our presentday splitters cannot cover themselves with false glory or justification by pretending to imitate Lenin in their activities.

We have had to deal with this question in so much detail because all those, who are interested in the socialist revolution (and not only Communists) must familiarise themselves with this history and defeat the attempts of the splitters to mislead the Socialist and Communist workers and Communist-minded people in India and elsewhere. Without knowing the history of the growth of the Communist movement in the world, without the history of of the International and how the European Parties and the Bolsheviks, and later on all of us, who were on the Third International, dealt with questions of differences in a democratic way, much of what is happening today in the schism of our movement would look inexplicable and sometimes meaningless. No. It is not meaningless. These schemes have had their effects on revolutionary developments and hence Communists as well as all those who want to go forward to socialism, have to learn this history.

We will now look into the story of the Third Communist International which Lenin founded to see what guiding lines it has left for us. The Third International in its existence from 1919 to 1943 dealt with many revolutions, many schisms and many Communist Parties. It has left behind a vast store of experience. It had to deal with our Party also, as we were a constituent part of the International. We will now turn to that history.

(To be Continued Next Week)

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French Elections

MOHIT SEN

THE victory of de Gaulle at the polls is fraught with the most dangerous consequences. His victory solves none of the problems which led to the tremendous mass upheaval last May and June. He comes to a position of monopoly of power—a reflection of the power of the monopolies—at a time when very grave decisions regarding French economy and society have to be taken. The temptation for a gamble, for an onslaught on the working class, as a start to a general offensive against democracy, will be very great. The calculation will be that the Left and democratic forces in France will be too demoralised even for defence, let alone for hitting back. But calculations, especially of power-drunk imperialist politicians, are also likely enough to be grave miscalculations.

Before attempting a brief prognosis of the likely run of events in post-election France, it would be as well to point to some other conclusions or lessons, which would be of value far beyond the frontiers of France.

In the first place, what happened to the mythmakers who were shouting hoarse that the French CP was betraying the revolution? Where was the “revolutionary situation” which transformed itself into a six percent increase in the “pure” Gaullist vote and that, too, with a record poll? If one believes the capitalist slander that “revolutions” are made against the will of the majority then, of course, one can go on with the charge of “betrayal” against the French CP. Otherwise, the least that one can do is to reflect self-critically and be grateful to the

French CP for not allowing the vanguard party and leading class to be decimated by reaction before it has won the majority of the people for the revolution. If democracy has yet a chance of survival in France it is due to this sagacity, knowledge of the situation and remarkable realistic courage of the French CP. Without it not only the elections but all would have been lost. Indonesia would have been repeated in France. The first point in characterising a revolutionary situation is that the majority of the people should not want to live in the old way. Obviously that was not the case in France in June 1968.

Secondly, what about the so-called “disenchantment” with the French CP on the part of huge sections of the working class, about which so many raucous voices shouted so gleefully? It is true that the French CP vote dropped by a little over two percent and by about six lakhs in absolute numbers. But it still retained 20 percent of the vote and about five and a half million in absolute numbers. Some “disenchantment”! The great Red base among the workers of France proved invulnerable. Loyalty and grit—once again these great proletarian qualities shine through all the fog of the malicious talk of so-called coffee-parlour revolutionaries. The votes the French CP lost were of the middle sections who obviously succumbed to the Gaullist propaganda. It retained its base and lost relatively little because of its policy of combining militancy with realism.

Thirdly, the votes that swung

away from the French CP and even more from Mitterand's Socialist Federation did not swing to the far Left. Poor Mendes-France was gambling that his complete demagogic support of the Anarchist sections of the students would bring him windfall gains! Not only did his party fare disastrously but he also failed to get elected. This fact only underlines the utter irresponsibility of those who were urging the French CP to be more “revolutionary” and who were decrying the latter's stern demarcation from the Anarchists of various brands. If their charge that the French CP was lagging behind events was true then not only would there have been a far larger swing away from it but this swing-away would have benefitted the so-called ultra “Left”. The same would have been the case with the Socialist Federation.

It is now absolutely clear that the Anarchists objectively helped the very Establishment against whom they subjectively wanted to destroy. It is now clear why the Establishment gave so much press, radio and TV publicity to these elements while, simultaneously, blacking out the activities of the working class, its trade unions and its great Party. The alternatives posed were—either de Gaulle or Cohn-Bendit. This was deliberately done to prevent the poser of the real alternative—either de Gaulle or a Left and democratic *entente*.

Now that the election results have disproved their favourite thesis, there is a danger of a swing to the other extreme on the part of these “revolutionary”

soothsayers. Now they may retreat into a pessimistic trance. They may claim that either a revolutionary transformation is impossible in France or that a revolution can only succeed in the shape of a sudden surprise, that is, some kind of *coup d'état*. Their pessimism would be as misplaced as their previous adventurist sally.

Nothing, not all the election results in the world, can erase the fact of the mass upheaval in May and June in France. Even if it did not indicate a revolutionary situation, it was a stupendous happening by any standards. The sweep of the strike movement of the workers, its militancy, doggedness and splendid organisation will ever remain a most memorable moment in the world revolutionary movement. Not only that. Important economic demands were won and democratic rights secured. These are not going to be easily surrendered, if at all. The myth that the workers have become "integrated" with modern capitalism has been totally demolished. Illusions about de Gaulle have vanished as far as the vast majority of the French workers are concerned. This in itself is a tremendous gain.

Further, the splendid unity of the working class in May and June has many a lesson to convey, above all, to the Social-democrats. Unity of the Communists and Socialists, for which the French CP has been tirelessly working, was realised at the factory level. It has yet to be raised to the political-programmatic level [(electoral adjustments are certainly welcome but, after all, a very elementary form of unity). In this connection, the article by the French CP's Polit Bureau member, Francois Billoux, in the May, 1968, issue of *Peace, Freedom, Socialism*, is of extraordinary interest. It shows how from supporting de Gaulle in 1958 the Socialists have moved to, at least, discussing a programme for an alternative Government with the Communists. Quite obviously, the French CP (the proud initiator of the whole concept of the Popular Front as far back as

1936) will pursue this line of unity with still greater energy. And the response might be speedier. For, as the election results have revealed the bogey of "totalitarian Communism" harms, above all, the Social-democrats who do not wholeheartedly fight back this way cry of reaction. Either surrender to Gaullist reaction or firmer unity with the Communists in the shape of an alternative Left programme for France—this is the choice facing the Socialists and other non-Communist democrats in France. It is not precluded that precisely as reaction presses its offensive this unity of the Left will also take on more coherent and firmer shape.

The students, too, have surely learnt many lessons, not least regarding the futility of ultra-revolutionary phrase-mongering. After all, the students of France fought militantly. They were brought face to face with the reactionary character of the de Gaulle regime. They have learnt that whatever advance they will make has to be made through struggle against this regime. They will have to go on to learn that it is stupid and self-defeating not to be completely serious about struggle. And seriousness entails the search for others, for unity, for a programme that creates solidarity for struggle. Seriousness means the abandonment of Anarchism as well as of posturing leaders.

A Significant Fact

It is a significant fact that Anarchism today takes on the cloak of Marxism. It is a significant fact that the Anarchist student leaders went to Highgate cemetery to pay homage to Marx. Perhaps, they "forgot" that some of the bitterest ideological battles Marx waged was against the ideas of Anarchism whether those of Proudhon, Blanqui or Bakunin. If one tries to draw a historical analogy one would point out that in Lenin's days the Right revisionists swore by Marx against the Bolsheviks. And, today, the modern Anarchists also swear by Marx against the continuators of Bolshevism—"Left" revisionism. While this

is, undoubtedly, a tribute to the revolutionary appeal of Marxism it means that a prolonged ideological struggle will have to be waged within the ranks of the revolutionary movement to clarify, again, the essentials of Marxism.

In reality, the world Communist movement—with continental and national variations—has to face up to the problem of what is called the "New Left", some of whose philosophers are Marcuse, Debray, Fanon and the abbreviated edition of Maoist theory. There is need to make a systematic study of these theories, examine the nature of their appeal to the students and sections of the youth and analyse the weakness of the ideological struggle of the world Communist movement taken as a whole. It is heartening in this regard to read the article of the General Secretary of the Communist Party of USA, Gus Hall, in the May issue of *Peace, Freedom, Socialism*. He points out: "The simultaneous growth and the inter-relationships of the movements for socialism and the movements of national liberation has resulted in an explosive growth of Marxism. Much of this new influence has taken place in non-working class sections of the population. Thus, much of this new Marxist influence has been superimposed upon deep petty-bourgeois influences of nationalism, of petty-bourgeois radicalism, influences of racism and chauvinism. This is always fertile soil for opportunism. There is a broad challenge to working class ideas within this broad new Marxist development itself.....In the capitalist countries petty-bourgeois radicalism with influences of anarchism has grown into a rather serious problem". He suggests that the international Communist movement should appoint a commission to go into the problem.

The international Communist movement has broken new ground in approaching the Social-democrats, the progressive Catholics as well as the revolutionary democrats and progressive nationalist leaders in the Third World. It has broken

much of its own previous sectarianism in defining its attitude to these sections. And it has made gains, too, in this sphere. It has, with equal seriousness and consistency, to take up the problem of allies on the "Left." Alliance here, too, presupposes drawing lines of demarcation, reinforcement of one's own Marxist ideological grounding, consistent ideological struggle as well as constant, concrete proposals for joint action and evolution of agreed, minimum programmes. Both opportunist glossing over of differences and sectarian repulsion, have to be avoided when evolving one's approach to the varied categories of the "New Left". The problem is at once easier and more difficult because of the latter's swearing by Marx.

With due modesty, it should

be said that the CPI has had to face this problem for the past few years and has not made too bad a job of dealing with it. The problem persists and even may be accentuated with the formation of the "Naxalbari" CP.

The results of the French election have, undoubtedly, brought temporary advantage to reaction in France. There is no reason to doubt that they will attempt to make the most of it. The French CP has warned about the possible advance to the fascination of the regime.

At the same time, the crisis that led to the election has not resolved by its result. The deeper crisis of French imperialism, against the background of the accentuation of the general crisis of capitalism already in its third stage, has also not been resolved. De Gaulle talks of a "third"

way, a participatory society avoiding both the inequities of capitalism and the "totalitarianism" of Communism. This kind of social demagoguery and manoeuvring is both symptomatic of the depth of the crisis of the entire system in France as well as pregnant with possibilities of an attempted restructuring of it along lines of Mussolini's corporate state.

The obstacles in the way of such a development should not, however, be overlooked. The change in the world balance of forces as well as the start towards a Left and democratic *entente* in France are countervailing forces of the greatest consequence. The class struggle in France has had violent ups and downs in the recent months. Its accentuation is on the agenda and with the issue in the balance.

Problems Before SSP

GAURE MURAHARI

THE Press has published a version of my letter to the Chairman of SSP Sri S. M. Joshi. I would like therefore to clarify certain issues that I had raised.

Ever since the death of Dr Lohia, the SSP has been trying to evolve some kind of collective leadership. There have been stresses and strains and one had hoped that in the long run a cohesive leadership would emerge. Unfortunately, recent events seem to belie this hope. That is why it is necessary to have a proper discussion.

It is not that one section of the leadership is to blame and another free of blame. But in the context of events, each issue has to be examined vis-a-vis the attitude of the leaders to such issues.

There has been a discussion in the Party regarding non-Con-

gress Ministries and the participation in such Ministries. The National Conference which met at Gaya decided to pull out of these Ministries because of non-implementation of certain programmes, which the Party wanted to implement within a particular time limit.

The UP Ministers pulled out. The Bihar Ministers were given time till the Assembly met and discussed the no-confidence motions pending against it. The Kerala Ministers were given some more time. Subsequently, resolution was passed by National Conference asking even the Kerala and MP Ministers to resign, in view of the fact that the Party was to launch an all-India struggle. The Kerala Ministers argued against this position and ultimately the Party took a firm line against them

with the result that the Party split in Kerala.

Having risked a split in Kerala one hoped that this line would be adhered to.... But unfortunately in Bihar and MP, the Party decided to allow one Minister to rejoin the Ministry, though conditionally. Assurances were given that Land Tax would be abolished. But such assurances were forthcoming even before. However, the Party leadership were of the opinion that the office seeking mentality had come to stay in the Party. Then it would have been much wiser to allow Ministers to continue in office even while the all-India struggle was on. Some of these Ministers could have been exempted from offering Satyagraha or they could have offered Satyagraha even while being Ministers.

One fails to understand the futile exercise that the Ministers were made to undergo, especially when they were later permitted to rejoin the Ministries, even while the all-India Satyagraha was on.

A word about Satyagraha itself will not be out of place here. The Satyagraha resolution was passed in December last year. Some people were appointed as organizers to prepare for the struggle. There was no preparation worth the name. Most leaders were busy with either confabulations regarding Ministry-makings or Ministry-breakings, or at best with the Kutch Satyagraha, which I may add did not form part of all-India Satyagraha. An attempt is now being made to mix up the Kutch Satyagraha with what was proposed to be the all-India Satyagraha for the charter of demand formulated by the Party in December.

No Courage

I have no quarrel with those who may want to say that having gone to jail for the Kutch Satyagraha, they need not court arrest again in an all-India Satyagraha but there are some leaders who did not feel the need to court arrest in either of the Satyagrahas though they happened to be the organizers of all-India Satyagrahas. Having given a call for an all-India Satyagraha, the leadership should have had the courage to own up responsibility and take decisions regarding its conduct. Unfortunately, the leadership let the whole Satyagraha drift. There was no firm date either for launching or for its completion. Neither did the National leadership have the responsibility of calling off the Satyagraha. They left it to State Units.

What is more strange is the fact that the last date of the membership of Party for current year was 30th June. One fails to understand how the membership could be enrolled with many people still in jail till that date. The leadership has not been able to stem this drift.

Ever since Dr Lohia's death, certain elements in the Party have

taken to the path of deliberate indiscipline. And instead of their being curbed, the leadership seems to be vulnerable to their pressures. Sometimes such elements through sheer affrontery seem to get indirect backing from the leadership.

I am not concerned here with the personalities involved, although the Press has tried to bracket me with one or the other of the personalities in the Party. Neither am I concerned with State loyalties, although I am firmly of the opinion that the national leadership should keep itself out of factionalism within States. Once they get involved either directly or indirectly with any particular faction within the States, they cease to be national leaders. Nor should the national leadership work with a bias against a particular state.

The only attribute that the SSP had was its consistency with regard to certain policies, as also its militancy. Once this is given the go by, there is bound to be no difference between us and any other party, say the PSP. Some of our top leaders, barring our Chairman, seem to be more pre-occupied with their parliamentary performances than with mass work. This has to be corrected. Some of our basic policies are also under attack. After the death of Dr Lohia, a whispering campaign has started in our Party against our Caste Policy.

No Shift Mergers

While some in the Party are trying to use the Caste Policy to bolster up their own selfish and factional interests, others have taken the opportunity of questioning the very policy itself. In the absence of a firm and cohesive leadership these diverse elements are bound to create confusion in the Party. It is better that the SSP indulges in a public discussion of all these trends and enables both a cohesive leadership and firm policies. It is not enough to formulate policies, we have both to formulate and implement the policies. We will be accused of hypocrisy if while implementing a formulated policy, we deliberately deviate from it.

There is a talk about unity with PSP. Some of our leaders indulge in this talk more as a counsel of despair than out of any firm conviction. Several times I have been quoted as being against merger of PSP and SSP. I am certainly opposed to make shift mergers, because that will only create further splits. But if there is a programmatic agreement between PSP and SSP, and if a genuine desire to build a left-oriented party is there, I will certainly welcome the merger. At the same time I would like such a merger to embrace the Forward Block, RSP, RCPI, and RPI, P & WP, DMK and such other regional parties. On a broader level we could also explore the possibilities of a Left Front which could embrace the Communists also. Either we have a broad front embracing maximum possible leftist content with minimum programme or we stick to our policies, which are well defined, time bound and concrete.

The middle experiments in my opinion will only be waste of energies without any results.

The Party, if it were united and if a cohesive leadership is evolved has an important role to play as in the past 1967 period, both as a vanguard of the left forces in the country and as a common denominator among the non-Congress parties. Therefore, it is necessary that the Party not only evolve a collective leadership but also come to grip with all these problems. The sooner we get into a discussion of these the better for us, otherwise the rot would affect the vitals of the party and then it may be too late to mend.

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Consolidation of the Socialists

BRIJ MOHAN TOOFAN

ALL those who sought quick results after the formation of United Front Governments in the States where the Congress fell from grace are once again having an agonizing self-appraisal of their actions and achievements.

Not only that the non-Congress Governments have been toppled in some States at the behest of the foul designs of Congress Government at the Centre but it has also posed a problem for the people who had given a merciless verdict against the misdeeds of the Congress rulers. What happened to their hopes and aspirations? Who is to be held responsible for the climate that is being gradually created in the country that the Congress has no alternative but Congress? A grave situation has arisen as anti-Congress proclamation of the constituents of United Front Governments have been rendered meaningless and proved devoid of all sanity especially when they fell among themselves and found no time to redress the grievances of the common man. The vested interests are once again jubilant over the new trends.

Businesslike Opportunism

It is a fact that we definitely assumed that the Congress as an organisation composed of heterogeneous groups and ruthless cut-throat bosses was on the way out and the vacuum had to be filled by those who had patiently been waiting for the past twenty years. The Leftists aligned with their worst opponents to keep the Congress out of power wherever possible. A section resented abandoning the advocacy of "Go alone" but felt helpless.

Peaceful coexistence amongst the erstwhile Opposition parties brought about a temporary absence of conflict of decades. Nationalism kissed the scarred face of anti-nationalism. Socialism hugged feudalism and democracy mated with totalitarianism in the name of minimum programme. It was opportunism of the wickedest kind and was painted as businesslike, effective and booming. But then the Congress had to be taught a lesson.

The notion that the non-Congress alliance would get things done more efficiently and give the people the much-awaited revolutionary change was a romantic illusion of the legislators and the people alike. To me it was to obey the dictate of the changing wind and I saw in it an opportunity to test the mettle of the Leftists and their minds. It was indeed a gamble sure to lose and all the parties who joined the bandwagon proved to be the worst losers.

The overrated charisma of the Congress party as well as of the alliance of the Opposition parties evaporated in thin air in this gamble of capturing power. Power proved to be as illusive as the proverbial beloved and in its wild pursuit the politicians and their parties and principles got shamelessly denuded. And just after one year of this game of hide and seek, where do we find ourselves?

People Feel Cheated

Within the framework of confusion caused by the turncoats and the defectors curious situations have arisen. The ideo-

logies despite the fact that they are genuine are not at all felt to be of any importance by the people. The liquidation of the old parties or the birth of the new ones has not brought tears or mirth in the eyes of the common man, the ever-exalted voter. The people feel cheated and humiliated and, therefore, are showing a kind of submissive uneasiness but this will not let any polarisation of the parties to take place. The people will now onwards split into factions and Independents depending whether they lurch into violence or remain pathetically inarticulate. Most probably they will show contempt for the fake militants, indifference for the authoritarianisms and anger for the democrats. All have proved to be hypocritical, self-interested and cowardly. No single party could wait a little longer to win over the ever-abiding loyalty of the electorate.

A great deal of upheaval is yet in store for political India. The scale of the change could be anyone's guess. The shifting loyalties, the breakdown of convictions, the splintering of the trust, the combination and permutation of interests would baffle many minds. The adventurers will roam the land. The privileged will exaggerate the march of chaos and Leftism and the Leftists will predict a holocaust at the birth of every new factory. The Right will be rubbing shoulders with the Left and both Left and Right under the impact of revolutionary technology and change in the cold war will discover their mistaken policies as barriers to effective action.

It is, in fact, the most fascinating era that has unmasked the holowness of many priests and their sermons. The parties that for twenty long years attacked mercilessly the centre of power have suddenly discovered the brittleness of their own centres. With the first magic touch of power the so-called parties of great discipline have fallen apart like a house of cards and the ideologies they adhered to for the past four decades appeared as distorted mirrors.

To Rebuild Rome

In anguish the cry one hears is that democracy is coming to an end. What rubbish! The terrible thing that has happened is old fashioned organisations suddenly confronted a psychological change in their impulses which they never dreamt of. These changes ought to be properly analysed before we proceed further either to stop defections by law and bring about an enforced polarisation or permit this massive drifting to take a toll of political stands.

Barring a small minority of lunatics, the persons indulging in power politics always believed that many ideals could be actualised if the Congress was thrown out of power. And the Congress did lose. It might take another four to five years when the Congress is completely cut down to its size and power then would be shared by many groups including the Congress. More confusion would prevail then. More heart-searching would take place. But the economy that would be inherited by the new regimes in many States as well as at the Centre will be of very distorted nature. The number of the impoverished people despite the new Mexican seed would be on the increase.

Taking advantage of the devastating nature of politics and low standards of political morality the world powers will put further pressures to seek concessions of one kind or the other. This will humiliate further the national instincts of the country and the totally sold-out intelligentsia will clamour for the army.

This is the picture I see emerging in the next half decade. It has to be altered, and unless we vividly see the present-day confusion and the coming onslaughts of useless extremism we can neither dominate politics nor bend the shape of things. We at the moment have many illusions; let us shed them one by one and as fast as possible, and start from afresh to rebuild the Rome that is burning.

The tragedy in personal terms is going to be very great, and its depth, scope and canvas would be no less spectacular than the Shakespearian theme. Disillusionment has already been distasteful, vicious and long. It is not so much with democracy and socialism as with its leadership; and, be it noted, it is not the desertion of the leaders as their deliberate effort to distort the natural development of socialism and order. The Indian road to socialism got blocked with heaps of false promises made by fake Socialist and Communist prophets.

Fresh Winds of Thought

Time has come to take a fresh appraisal of the whole show lest we die in vain holding the banners of equality, freedom and justice that remain unseen by the millions who have entered the stage since 1947. The thing that sticks in our throats most is that even after two decades no ideology or value has been accepted by the people whose distaste for the ideologies and their simplified *mantras* remain unabated. This has in fact undermined the determination of do-gooders as well as of the revolutionaries and the Leftists or the combination of both. Perhaps all of us, the Socialists and the non-Socialists, are found at this juncture experimenting the fiasco of an experiment, perhaps in the fast changing world where cold war has come to an end, the Leftists seem to have no long range perspective of freedom of action and are dictated by the hangover of the immediate past.

While all political parties are trying to find an answer to the ills of the country, the forthcoming elections in some States

and the changed political picture in others has managed to wrest a cry of anguish from those who claim to be socialists and stand for social revolution in India. The problem of socialist consolidation, the left unity of the socialists is taxing the minds of all those who consider themselves the pioneers of the Left thought, custodians of the socialist revolution and pillars of anti-statusquoism. Amongst them are the organised parties as well those who while contributing to the Left ideology did not actually participate in any socialist action.

The categories of Socialists are many. It is a long way from the Congress socialists to the Maoists and yet they all moan the rapid decline of democracy and socialism. Without going into the motives of the leaders of the movements lest it creates more bitterness, it will be sufficient to seek ways and means as to how the much needed unity can be forged. A conscious anti-vested interests movement or for that matter a socialist movement has become all the more urgent to give back to the people their much cherished future full of hope and plenty.

There are some extremists in all political parties who desire to remain in wilderness and resist all talk of consolidation of socialism. They are eager either to devour another political party or under the compulsion of rigidity of their Party organisation prefer to move alone until their capacity to become totally ineffective reaches a saturation point. I have nothing to say to such groups with perverse thinking and have only the following logic of coalition to offer to all concerned so that the bright and militant are not wasted on the sand dunes of confusion and hypocrisy.

The Consolidation

Here it must be made clear that the unity to be forged to confront the forthcoming elections in some States now or in the general elections later on is of a secondary nature, the real need of the day is a consolidated socialist movement. Such a movement alone can remove the

hurdles in the path of people, the millions of unprivileged, the have-nots, who have been cheated of their due share in free India. The present establishment requires a gigantic shake up and who but a consolidated socialist movement can even think of it. A minimum programme jointly agreed to by the Left parties after the formation of a non-Congress government will only bring a minimum change in some walks of political and economic life and in certain situations even the bare minimum is not possible. If the Socialists really intend to take effective steps towards the emancipation of the people after coming into power here or there, the prerequisite of these results is again the consolidation of Socialist forces. A coalition of the Socialists is a must, much before the Socialists enter the arena of elections.

Coalition of Socialists

Whether due to compulsions of circumstances or because of urges of the liberal doctrine, a political party divorced from the concept of totalitarianism and having the knack of using tactics and strategy to further the cause of democracy and socialism stands now and then in need of allies. Whether it pursues an issue-oriented politics or the policies of 'go alone', coalition of a sort in power or in opposition sometimes becomes unavoidable with other likeminded group or groups. Is not, in a way, each political party a combination of different trends, thought processes within a framework of an established ideology and its offshoots? A single party, howsoever wedded to a partisan doctrine unless, of course, it is already at the helm of affairs in the first stage of development, is compelled, in a class and caste ridden society, while struggling to transform it into a classless one to align itself with elements whose operational effectiveness is sometimes based on partly clean politics and not on the absolute purity of its principle. A party that caters to the needs of the havenots, the desires of the petty middle classes and politics of vocal and articulate

white color community and sympathises with the impoverished peasantry often submits to the requirements of the different sections of society and very often accommodates more than one social interests as well.

Dangerous Trend

Indian masses who seldom try to shape the formation of political parties also do not relish their affinity with any party and yet the parties do reflect the socio-economic interests claimed by various sections of society. Had there been two parties, the involvement would have been crystal clear but the masses being unaware of their interests keep the organised groups in suspense—a dangerous trend in democracy.

Politics of splinters is the rage of India and it must stop as this alone will bring the necessary coalition of like-minded parties or their mergers as the need arises.

Indian Socialism does not function pragmatically and is divorced from political sophistication. The mass organisations that usually provide security and stability are still missing and we are not yet familiar with structures that serve democracy. The localism may be a peculiar phenomenon in the West but in India the Socialist discipline has suffered the most due to it. True, major parties will get more setbacks at the hands of Indian localism necessitating the much needed coalition in opposition. Let this coalition be between many forms of action and kinds of militancy, economic innocence and political articulacy which alone will bring consolidation and rewards to the people who will start desiring commitment. Let it be clear that politics of Socialist coalition in opposition must be influential and adequate otherwise frustration looms large on such endeavours. Let socialism not mourn over the futile existence of its groups which shun one another and elevate failures as achievements. We must have a new style in the coalition of the Socialists.

Can any Socialist group win political power at the Centre all by itself? Impossible in the near future, and therefore, allies are needed including leaderless socialist parties and partyless socialist leaders. The mainstream of socialism must have the capacity to attract the movements based on self-sacrifices. Even those individuals committed only to social progress need not be left behind.

To redeem the soul of India, socialists of all hues have to be our historic allies. The church, the capital and the tradition is well organised, only the coalition of the socialists can defeat them. The much needed dialogue and debate on issues, controversial and complicated must start right now as segetating is no answer to the growing stature of the problems. The radical coalition of the progressives should of course be within the fold of the socialist movement. How can we go on giving an impression that we intend to remain ineffective?

Let the Socialists provide that great vision which mobilises the millions and brings together the social do-gooders and socialist revolutionaries.

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Formulating UP's Fourth Plan

KRIPA SHANKAR

UP ranks eleventh amongst the States in per capita income. The per capita income in UP at Rs. 297 is considerably lower when compared to the per capita income in Maharashtra at Rs 489, West Bengal Rs 465 and Punjab Rs 451. The national per-capita income at Rs 335 is also higher by Rs 38 compared to the per capita income in UP.

Not only does UP have very low per capita income but it is losing place to other States. In 1950-51 the per capita income in UP at Rs 260 was higher by Rs 12 compared to the national per capita income at Rs 248. By 1960-61 the per capita income in UP at Rs 268 was lower by Rs 20 compared to the national per-capita income of Rs 288 (at 1948-49 prices). Whereas the per capita income in UP rose by Rupees eight during the first decade of planning, it rose by Rs 20 in the case of the country as a whole. Almost all the States recorded a higher rate of growth.

Whatever economic growth was achieved during the First and the Second Plan tapered off during the Third Plan. During the Third Plan period, the State income rose by eight per cent but the per capita income declined by 2.5 per cent. The per capita income in the State in 1965-66 was Rs 244 as compared to Rs 246 in 1960-61 at 60-61 prices. During this period the national income rose by 10 per cent but there was no increase in per capita income in UP.

It is obvious that the investments that have been made in the state have been too inadequate to bring about any appreciable change in the economy.

The State income is not growing even at the rate at which the population is growing. This is a distressing situation. The consumption standards of the people have not increased and the number of totally unemployed and the under-employed is on the increase. The number of totally unemployed persons which stood at 18 lakhs at the end of the Second Plan in the State rose to 21 lakhs at the end of the Third Plan. During the Fourth Plan period and the three intervening years the number of additional persons entering the labour market is estimated to be around 50 lakhs. Providing jobs to these large number of new entrants is a stupendous task.

During the Third Plan the total public outlay in the State was of the order of Rs 555 crores. The Centre contributed 70 per cent of this outlay. In early 1965, the State Government submitted a preliminary Fourth Plan draft to the Planning Commission envisaging an investment of Rs 1400 crores, which in the opinion of the State Government was the minimum required if the State was not to be left further behind the other states with regard to economic development. The Planning Commission did not approve of this amount on the ground that the State did not have the resources to finance a plan of this magnitude. It advised the State to draft a revised plan of the order of about Rs 1100 crores. When the State Government submitted a revised plan envisaging an outlay of Rs 1055 crores in October 1966, the same also ran into hot waters as no firm commitment was

forthcoming by the Centre to finance this plan. The State Government had plainly stated that it would not be in a position to raise more than Rs 360 crores towards financing the plan and the balance would have to be met by Central assistance. But the Planning Commission had indicated that the State should not expect more than Rs 430 crores as the quantum of Central assistance.

The total Central assistance for all the States was placed at Rs 3653 crores, out of which UP was to get Rs 430 crores, which formed 14.5 per cent of the total central assistance available. The per capita Central assistance for UP in all the previous three plans was quite low when compared to the other States. Hence the State Government argued that this time UP should be favoured with a larger Central assistance. The Centre pleaded its inability to do so on account of tight resources position. However the Centre agreed to increase the amount of assistance to about Rs 495 crores but wanted the State to mobilise Rs 431 crores as its contribution. Thus the total outlay approved for the Fourth Plan is of the order of Rs 926 crores although the State Government has expressed its doubts, publicly, about its capacity to raise the prescribed quantum as its contribution.

In the meantime annual plans were drawn as the Fourth Plan could not be finalised on account of uncertain resources position. The annual plan outlay for the last year of the Third Plan and the succeeding years is

given below :

Annual Plan Outlay in UP
(Rupees Crores)

1965-66	170
1966-67	134
1967-68	151
1968-69	151

The quantum of Central assistance was Rs 88 crores in 1967-68 and the same has been reduced to Rs 76 crores in the current year that is, 1968-69.

It is significant to note that the Plan outlay for all the three years following the last year of the Third Plan have been lower compared to that year's outlay and secondly the quantum of Central assistance has been more or less pegged round Rs 80 crores annually. The State has not been able to raise more than Rs 70 crores annually for financing the plan.

On present indications, it thus becomes clear that the Fourth Plan of about Rs 750-800 crores alone is feasible. This amount in fact is lower than the outlay during the Third Plan taking into account the rise in the price level and the increase in population which is rising at the rate of two per cent per annum. The State Government has stated that a total investment of Rs 3000 crores including the investment expected in private sector, is essential, if the State is to reach the per capita income of Rs 315 by the end of the Fourth Plan which was the level of the national per capita income at the end of the Third Plan. With a considerably lower investment it is feared UP may finally lose the economic race.

The only alternative open before the State is to either make concerted efforts to raise its own resources or to get the quantum of Central assistance raised very considerably.

All hopes of increased central assistance should be given up for the Centre itself is in a tight financial position and it has made its position explicitly clear that the State should harness its own resources if it intends to go in for a bigger plan.

If we look at the possibilities of increasing the State resources, we find the situation beset with difficulties. The State in the past did undertake sufficient steps to augment its resources and the

possibilities of doing the same are now limited. During the past years the revenue of the State Government increased from Rs 52 crores in 1950-51 to Rs 355 crores in the current year. In other words the revenue increased seven-fold during these years but there was no corresponding increase in the per capita income. During the same period the per capita income witnessed a very modest increase. Against this background it would be difficult to impose further taxation without evoking popular wrath.

But this does not mean that those classes which have gained through the planning process should not be touched. As a matter of fact certain classes have gained inordinately during these years and it will be in fitness of things if they are forced to part with a portion of their windfall earnings. The big cultivators, industrialists, businessmen comprise this class. In the countryside the top three per cent of the cultivators own one-fifth of the total cultivable land. They have the surplus grains and other agricultural produce to dispose of and the rise in prices has benefited this class. The land revenue being on a flat rate, its incidence on this class is very light. The Agricultural Income Tax and the tax on large holdings is such that the total annual realisation through these measures is less than Rs 40 lakhs. The presence of this tax on the statute book is more nominal than real. The total income of this top three per cent of the cultivators is estimated to be about Rs 300 crores annually and tax on their income even at the rate of 10 per cent can fetch an annual revenue of 30 crores. The higher groups in the intermediate section of the cultivators can also contribute another sum of Rs 10 crores annually.

The urban industrialists and big businessmen who instead of investing their capital industrial ventures prefer to invest in landed estates, trading and other such ventures which give quick returns, can be so taxed as to bring an income of Rs 20 crores annually. Thus the additional mobilisation through taxation

measures can be of the order of Rs 300 crores for the Fourth Plan period

However no amount of further taxation will be justified unless serious efforts are made to eliminate all wasteful and non-productive expenditure. There is great resentment at the prevailing waste in administration expenditure and since there is great scope for economy the same should be seriously undertaken. The non-development expenditure, in UP increased from Rs 25 crores in 1950-51 to Rs 143 crores in the current year. Sri R. S. Verma, the outgoing Finance Minister of UP has stated that a saving of Rs 35 crores can be made by effecting economy in some of the major departments. He was further of the opinion that if the various revenue yielding departments were run efficiently a saving of Rs. 20 crores could be easily made. Likewise the collections from small savings can be enhanced if the additional income, instead of being taxed, is allowed to be saved and put in small savings schemes, the latter course being more popular too. The additional mobilisation through small savings can be around Rs 10 crores annually. The same can be raised to Rs 15 crores if intensive efforts are made to mobilise savings of small income groups through office, factory, school and through other establishments.

It can thus be said that the additional mobilisation of the order of Rs 650 crores can be made if the Government takes to it seriously. On this basis the total plan outlay for the Fourth Plan for the State can be of the order of Rs 1450 crores—a figure nearly one and half times higher than the one visualised by the Planning Commission when it approved the Fourth Plan for UP, prior to its being postponed. Incidentally this was the proposed outlay initially put forward by the UP Government but the same was not approved by the Planning Commission as the State did not have the resources to finance it. The State Government can well finance a Fourth Plan of this magnitude out of its own resources (the Central assistance being the same) provided it has a will to do so.

Languages and Nationalities

P. CHEERATH

A section of our political intelligentsia who go by historical precedents in Europe seem to be holding on to a theory that India is a land of many nationalities and therefore should not be considered one nation, because, "it does not resemble the national States which were the norm of 18th and 19th century Europe." (see A.S.R. Chari, *Mainstream*, April, 20, 1968)

Our linguistic provinces it is assumed, are separate nationalities, struggling for self-expression and growth into autonomous if not altogether independent republics. The example of the USSR comes handy, and since it is no "Union of Panchayat Socialist Republics" that we have in Delhi, the assumption may be that we are at the previous stage where one "great nation" oppresses smaller nationalities. Do we not hear of Hindi becoming the link language and of demonstrations against the imposition of Hindi.....? Hindi Prachar schemes then become comparable to the infamous Russification efforts! This line of reasoning is supported by the fact that India does not look like any of the West European nations; and moreover, it does not fit into the accepted definition of "nationality".

Before examining the claim of India to be a single nation, let us see if our linguistic states satisfy the approved definition. Marxists of all shades and also many other serious students of politics seem to take Stalin's definition, arrived at over thirty-five years ago on the basis of European experience, as a standard for determining nationality. It was an improvement upon Mill's

definition and the successful manner in which diverse peoples were unified with the formation of autonomous republics in the Soviet Union did invest Stalin's thesis with prestige and authority. Let me quote:

"A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of people, formed on the basis of common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make up manifested in common culture..... A nation constitutes the combination of all these characteristics taken together.....It is sufficient for a single one of these characteristics to be absent and the nation ceases to be a nation..."

Can we apply this test to our ten-year-old linguistic States, the "economic life" of which were and are parts of one whole, that is India? India is one fiscal unit, and so it was during the British period with unpopular exceptions in the Princely states. At present the States have no more separate economic life than the municipalities have, the role of the Centre being so preponderant. In our backward country where about 75 percent of the people are illiterate, tending their fields still like their forefathers when Ashoka was emperor—"psychological make-up" is largely based upon the inherited prejudices of religion and caste which often did cut across linguistic boundaries. Food habits, customs and manners seems to correspond more with religion and caste (even among workers in urban areas) although efforts are being made at present to stress linguistic homogenities.

Among the literate people in each province, psychological make-up differs also on regional

basis; Saurashtra and the rest of Gujarat, southern Maharashtra and Vidarbha, "Mysoreans" and other Kanarese speaking people, north Malabar and Travancore etc. are only a few examples for what is found in every province. Given time and encouragement, no doubt, these linguistic groups would develop more homogeneity, with the growth of literacy and reading habits. For the present it is important to note that all our national languages are backward, backward like the people who use them—the "glory" talks and "world-conferences" notwithstanding.

Some idea of the backwardness is available in the last (11th) report of the Press Registrar on the circulation of daily newspapers in different languages. Total daily circulation and sale per thousand persons are reproduced on next page along with comparative figures of some other backward countries.

The backwardness of the people accused (6.5 papers for 1000 Hindi-speaking people) of "great-nation chauvinism" is to be specially noted, because the attack on Hindi is patronised by foreign vested interests.

The Hindi-speaking areas are among the most backward regions, and efforts to spread Hindi in non-Hindi areas had commenced over three decades ago. The importance of the regional language as the only medium through which the message of freedom could be reached to the village was recognised early and Congress Committees were organised everywhere on linguistic basis.

To interpret this however as a

Language	Daily Circulation 1966		Sale per 1000—1965*
Hindi	806,000	copies	6.5
Malayalam	708,000	"	41.2
Tamil	688,000	"	21.6
Marathi	585,000	"	18.0
Bengali	487,000	"	10.9
Gujarati	472,000	"	22.9
Urdu	299,000	"	13.7
Kanarese	218,000	"	12.3
Telugu	189,000	"	4.3
Oriya	66,000	"	4.5
Punjabi	28,000	"	4.9
Assamese	15,000	"	2.0
Chile (1961)	10,47,000	"	134.0
Brazil (1963)	42,13,000	"	54.0
Ceylon (1960)	3,56,000	"	36.0

*(for Indian languages final-1966 figures were not ready. The Report has termed the figures here wrongly as "Readership")

recognition of the existence of different nationalities is to overstretch imagination and to equate language with nationality. Linguistic provinces were later formed as administrative units with a view to facilitating the growth of democratic institutions; the multinational state idea was entertained by some Marxist groups, but during the anti-British struggle it was never suggested. The spirit of the time was wholly with the "One nation, one people" idea and the breach came only with the demand for Pakistan. The Dravida Kazhakam which had raised the slogan of Dravida Nadu from Madras had conceived it more on a racial than linguistic basis and that organisation could make no headway even inside the Tamil region where the Congress Party had continued to play until lately, a dominant role. The DMK which had a similar ideology had to give up the idea of separate nationhood before it could gain ground among the Tamil people and the present compromised role of the DMK is some indication of the distinction people there draw between language and nationality. In Kerala too the idea of a separate, sovereign nation was mooted by a party some twenty years ago, and the fact that nothing was heard of it since speaks its own story.

Border and river-water disputes are no doubt giving an edge

to linguistic chauvinism, but inside each State also we find a veritable cold-war of castes, tribes and regions. Communal organisations operating on All-India scale are still able to establish loyalties across linguistic boundaries, and people are migrating in large numbers to industrial centres—regionalism notwithstanding.

These however do not mean that separate nationalities cannot be shaped out of the present linguistic states; it is possible, for instance, to make the people of Madhya Pradesh feel that they have little worth mentioning in common with those in the surrounding States and that their hope lies in establishing themselves into a sovereign Republic. In the short span of two decades, a few Baptist missionaries have succeeded in making the Naga tribes feel that they have more in common with the Anglo-Saxons than with the people of Assam! If it were some Mullahs of Pakistan who had gone about the job in the hills, Pakistan could have raised a demand for plebiscite there with a measure of confidence no less than that on Kashmir. When the western part of the Punjab and eastern part of Bengal broke away to form into a Pakistan, a nation in two distant parts, we had a case of facts overtaking theory, however much we may blame the

role of Imperialism. "Common psychological make-up" whatever be its ingredients (largely based on shared superstitions and prejudices) seems to be the only recognisable basis for the formation of nationalities in this part of the world, in this part of the century. At present there is no linguistic state in which a party will dare to go to the polls with a secession demand, claiming separate nationhood, Shiv Senas notwithstanding.

Idea of Nationality

The idea of nationality developed in Europe at the time of rising capitalism and in the east and west of Europe it took different forms. Whereas in the Western half, nation-states took shape, eastern Europe had multinational states developing at the same time. People in Europe never had the sense of belonging to one land as we in India had from very ancient times. Nor did the European continent know anything like the institutionalised caste system, holy rivers and common centres of pilgrimage which had been bringing people from distant parts of the country together. There were hundreds of kings and super-kings all over *Bharat Bhumi* fighting against each other even as the monarchs of Europe were fighting to expand their territories; but in this country the fortunes of kings had nothing to do with the commonly held idea of belonging to one great land "washed by holy rivers and specially blessed".

Sanskrit literature and the arts and customs of Hindus had spread to Burma (*Brahma Desh*) and all south east Asia including Viet Nam (*Champa* was its name) but these countries were never considered as parts of *Bharat Bhumi* the frontiers of which were incidentally defined by Kalidasa in the first poem of *Kumara Sambhavam*. Evidences to show an earlier consciousness of India (including Pakistan) as one country are there in Sanskrit which had played a great unifying role in India. Literary works in the regional languages, in the beginning, were merely reproducing for local peoples, what was available for a long time only in Sanskrit.

Our many Indian languages started developing with their regional peculiarities some four or five hundred years ago out of local Aryan or Dravidian dialects but what the best writers of each language expressed were the beliefs and values commonly held all over India. The same old wine of India's feudal times was being presented in the new bottles; epic stories and famous plays from the storehouse of Sanskrit were the first to appear in regional languages.

Indo-Aryan Script

A politically motivated attempt has lately been made to show that the case of Tamil in South India was different, that it did not absorb so many Sanskrit words like the other Dravidian languages and that it has preserved stories of earlier times. But a close scrutiny will show that the values expressed in the early Tamil literature were in no way different; and that the customs, manners and beliefs were similar; even the rituals and superstitions were the same! There need be no surprise about it, because Sanskrit and its script were not exactly Aryan but Indo-Aryan, developed long after the destruction of Mohanjo Daro and Harappa, and after centuries of settled living in the lands of Dravidian tribes.

During the Moghul period, large numbers of people got converted to Islam and many Muslim kingdoms flourished in different parts of the country, but they all belonged to what was then called "Hindustan", the one great country considered different from others. The whole country was brought under one administrative set-up during the British rule, but the concept of belonging to one country was there without ever having or needing one single, unified administrative authority.

What we developed during the British rule, that is in opposition to it, was the modern concept of nationalism which has a more secular basis. Here again we found it different from the experience in Europe where

social progress had preceded political progress. On the basis of wealth drawn from colonies, capital was accumulated by the trading class of Europe and it was that class which developed nationalism there in opposition to the old feudal overlords. In India and other colonial countries, nationalism developed in opposition to foreigner's rule, even some feudal sections participating in the fight for freedom, and before capitalism developed. Even today the major part of society in India and Pakistan remains feudal, and political power is being employed to bring about social changes. In Africa quite a few sovereign nations are in fact tribal states at present, where nationalism had grown on the basis of anti-imperialist struggles, where capitalistic development has yet to make a beginning.

Since the people of India have inherited a "common psychological make up" of belonging to one nation—however large be the territory and the number of its communities—the task now is to strengthen that common nationalism and unity, consistent with the requirements of social progress in all parts of the land. This has also an anti-imperialistic significance, for the unity of fifty-five crores of impoverished people enjoying adult suffrage is in itself a factor against Imperialism.

Responsibility of Progressive Forces

Moreover, this unity can be strengthened only in opposition to Imperialism. The modern system of communication, cinema and transport, common laws and administrative set-up, common defence and federal services, all-India political and other organisations, trade unions, inter-provincial trade and migrations to industrial centres, and many other factors are serving to lessen regional differences; the capitalist class also does not seem to be making their plans with any linguistic exclusiveness as they are vigorously marketing their goods in all provinces with similar advertising and sales-promotion campaigns. A natural process of integration is going apace while in some parts of the

country we notice also communal disturbances and linguistic chauvinism in recent years.

Sign of Sentiments

River-water disputes and linguistic border agitations are a sign of the increasing regional sentiments which have been developing since the national opposition to Imperialism began to accept compromises by stages. Collaboration with foreign monopolists and compromises with Imperialist policies of the West have been on the increase since 1960, and especially after the border clash with China in 1962 which enabled the most reactionary elements to pose as patriots and nationalists. Had India maintained a vigorous anti-Imperialist policy abroad and pursued a corresponding policy of self-reliant development at home we would not have heard anything about river-water disputes, regionalism, communal clashes or fissiparous tendencies. There is every reason to suspect the hand of imperialist agents behind the anti-Hindi crusade, communal clashes, Shiv Sena and other regionalistic tendencies which we have been lately witnessing in this country, and it is the responsibility of our progressive intelligentsia to counteract all this in every possible way.

Instead of stressing the unimportant and fancied differences among people speaking the same thing in different languages and allowing revivalist tendencies to grow, the task before us is to emphasise the many vital things in common for all our people and to encourage their forging fine bonds of human relationship in the course of working and living together wherever possible. Any other course under present-day conditions (with no dictatorship of the proletariat in New Delhi) will lead to linguistic animosities and the disintegration of the Indian Republic, and that will serve only the interests of Imperialism. No precedents are needed to guide us but only common requirements and a sense of political realities in an age when it is possible to shape the future in the manner we choose.

Have UF Governments Failed in Bihar?

ANJANI K. SINHA

THE proclamation of the President's rule on June 29, 1968 and the dissolution of the State Assembly have created a new situation in the political life of Bihar.

This followed the resignation of the 95-day-old Bhola Paswan Shastri Ministry on June 25 when the State Assembly was discussing the Appropriation Bill. The resignation took everybody by surprise. It caused surprise to the Raja of Ramgarh who had made his first appearance in the Budget session of the State Assembly that day, hoping to topple down the Ministry soon after the Appropriation Bill was passed. It caused surprise to those Congressmen and other MLAs who had witnessed the politics of 'purchase' and 'defection' during the last days of the first U F Government and were expecting the repetition of the same drama. It caused surprise to the public as well because all the local morning papers had published the news that the differences inside the SVD had been settled and the Raja had agreed to withdraw the letter he had written to the Governor intimating the cessation of support by his group to the Shastri Government.

The request of Sri Bhola Shastri to dissolve the Assembly and to arrange for the mid-term election was greeted by all, except some Congressmen, the Raja of Ramgarh, members of the Shoshit Dal, and a few such MLAs who had won their seats during the last General Election because of sheer anti-Congressism of people or because of the factional fight inside the Congress and were not sure of their

success at the hands of the electorate now.

The fall of the Shastri Government was followed by a desperate effort on the part of some Congress leaders headed by Sri Mahesh Prasad Sinha, the leader of Opposition in the outgoing Assembly, to form an alternative government. The effort proved futile not merely because the time given to Sri Sinha by the Governor was too short to consult the Congress High Command at the Centre and his colleagues in and out of Patna, but mainly because the other faction leaders were not ready to see Sri M.P. Sinha as Chief Minister with the support of the Raja of Ramgarh. Such a situation would have been inconvenient not only to Sri K. B. Sahay, the traditional enemy of the Raja, but also to Sri S.N. Sinha who is the unchallenged leader of the Rajputs inside the Congress. The Raja's entry into the Congress as a balancing force would have given him more scope to bargain inside the organisation than what he had when he was in the Congress fold in the past. Given a chance, there was every likelihood of Sri M.P. Sinha trying to push up the Raja as the alternative Rajput leader.

The Congress-Janta Party combination (105 plus 18) would not have succeeded in commanding a majority without the support of the Shoshit Dal (38), the party of defectors from different constituent parties of the first United Front. Even this triple alliance was able to muster only 161 MLAs in a house of 318 members. This would have been a precarious

majority, for it was an uphill task to keep all these 161 members together without giving them suitable engagements. And how could one think of making all the 38 Shoshit Dal members Ministers or Deputy Ministers when so many aspirants were there inside the Congress itself? In case only a few were to be selected, what would have been the role of others? The proclamation of the President's rule has deprived the political pundits of the opportunity of speculating about different permutations and combinations, but it has certainly spared the state of Bihar, at least for the next six months, the suffering of having an unstable government of self-seekers and defectors.

The fall of two United Front governments within the last fifteen months has created a lot of confused thinking among the intelligentsia in Bihar. Those who are traditional supporters of the Congress assert that the United Front, can never give a stable government to the State. No single party is in a position of getting absolute majority in the next election. The United Front will have to be formed again for fighting out the Congress during the mid-term poll, but who will be the constituents of the UF? Will it consist of all the political parties which were there in the UF on the day Sri Bhola Shastri resigned, or will it be a front of 'like-minded' people only? And what will be the connotation of the term 'like-minded'? The CPI may give one interpretation of the term, the SSP another and the Loktantrik Congress Dal may have a third explanation. Even

inside a particular party, different groups may find themselves akin to different parties. Suppose different parties sign a common agreed programme to impress the electorate but do not stick to it after the election, what will be the fate of the UF? When two United Fronts have already failed to give a stable government, what is the guarantee that the third one will not be unstable? All these questions are already being posed by different sections of people. For answering these questions, it is essential to go back, in brief, to the past and analyse some salient features of the two United Front Government in Bihar.

The first UF Government came into existence against the background of the general wave of anti-Congressism of the Fourth General Election days. The failure of the Congress governments to deliver the goods to the poverty-ridden people of Bihar, the corruption and malpractices followed by them during the past twenty years, the factional fight inside the Congress and the unprecedented drought and the reckless antipathy of the Congress regime in facing the situation created by it caused a lot of restlessness among the people. The excessive repressive measures adopted by Sri K.B. Sahay on the eve of the election added fuel to fire. He became a symbol of Congress terrorism and Sri Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, who fought a bitter election battle against him in the Patna West Constituency, became overnight the symbol of anti-Congressism. When the UF came in power, Mahamaya Babu became the leader of anti-Congressism in the eyes of the common man throughout the State. Wherever he went, a vast crowd gathered round him. Whatever he spoke, he assured the common man of a rosy future. The way the UF government faced the drought strengthened the hope of the people in it.

However, this situation did not continue for long. Soon after the drought was over, many people started questioning the intention of the UF government, about the implementation of its

33-point programme. Instead of facing the problem in a straight forward manner, the UF Government wanted to consolidate itself by fanning the feeling of anti-Congressism. An enquiry was instituted against six prominent members of the K.B. Sahay Ministry. The charges of corruption and malpractices against them were widely published, but no conscious effort was made to expedite the work of the Commission of Enquiry. The Congress leaders grew wild, and started making all sorts of desperate efforts to topple the UF Ministry. Thirty-eight MLAs defected from different constituent parties of the UF and formed the Shoshit Dal. All of them became Cabinet Ministers of State in the Ministry headed by Sri B.P. Mandal. The way things were manipulated and the vested interests opened their purse to encourage defection made the people hate the Congress even more. Once again, they felt attached to the UF.

Decisive Advantage

The fall of the first UF Government made the people forget its lapses. The immediate concern of the common man was to see what could be done to throw out the Shoshit Dal Government backed by the Congress. This was a decisive advantage the UF leaders had at the moment. This had another aspect as well. The crisis which the UF had to face from outside prevented the growth of contradictions inside the front, which had gradually started exposing the real character of its different constituents. The Jana Sangh on the one hand and the SSP, the PSP and the CPI on the other were sharply divided over the status of the Urdu inside the State and also over the question of the rights of the share-croppers. The supporters of the big landowners started subtle campaign against the Left parties, emphasising the point that they were strengthening the hands of the Congress by raising controversial questions. A sizeable section of the UF wanted to use anti-Congressism

as a weapon against the Left forces, compelling them to remain in the Front without pressing for the implementation of economic reforms.

The consolidation of the Left forces was also weakened because of the caste-oriented politics of the SSP, a party which has theoretically tried to replace the concept of class-conflict by that of caste-conflict. As a result, Sri B. P. Mandal, one of the richest landowners in Bihar (who hails from the district of Saharasa where the sharecroppers' problems are very acute) emerged as the leader of a new party called the Shoshit Dal (the party of the exploited). This party drew 38 MLAs in its fold, most of whom belonged to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and the backward community. The Shoshit Dal government aroused new hopes in the minds of some backward communities but they were soon disillusioned when they found that the Government was virtually run by discredited Congress leaders from behind the scene. The situation became so intensely intolerable that many honest Congressmen started feeling restless and suffocated. People like Sri Binodanand Jha, Dr L. N. Shudhanshu, Sri Bhola Paswan Shastri and Sri K. K. Singh felt that they had no option but to leave the Congress and fight out the illfamed caste leaders by joining the SVD.

The formation of the Loktantrik Congress Dal was different in character from the formation of the Shoshit Dal. It was not dominated by any particular cast nor was it a party of those who had defected from their parent organisation for money and seats in the cabinet. In the beginning, many people did not (or could not) differentiate between the one defection and the other, but when leading figures like Pandit Binodanand Jha, Sri Hari Nath Mishra and Dr L. N. Sudhanshu did not join the Cabinet, people started having second thoughts about them. The resignation of Sri Bhola Shastri has established the point that these people are made of different mettle.

The coming of the second UF in power started the process of exposing people in their true colour. The first to be exposed was Sri Mahamaya Prasad Sinha. As soon as the UF chose a new leader in his place, he started speaking against the Left parties, particularly against the CPI, though it is known to everybody in Bihar that he had won the two crucial elections (the one against Sri Mahesh Prasad Sinha at Muzaffarpur in 1957 and the other against Sri K. B. Sahay in Patna West Constituency in 1967) mainly with the support of the Communists. Though the character of the UF had now changed for better (for many self-seekers had gone out of it to form the Shoshit Dal and many honest Congressmen had now come to its fold), he started calling its politics "a politics devoid of moral values and a sense of service". The commonman who had seen him as a symbol of anti-Congressism, had by this time known the fact that during the last days of his office, he had withdrawn all the 280 State cases against Sri Kamakshya Narayan Sinha, the Raja of Ramgarh, from the High Court of Calcutta, causing a loss of about Rs Ten crores to the State exchequer. Mahamaya Babu quickened the process of disillusionment against him by giving all sorts of irrelevant statements to the press and by refusing cooperation to the new SVD government.

At this stage, the Raja of Ramgarh, the real leader behind the BKD in Bihar, walked out of the organisation with 17 other members and revived the old Janta Party. He and his brother joined the Cabinet. People welcomed this step of the Raja, though they expressed resentment they were told that the Raja was insisting on his getting the Departments of Mines and Minerals, and on being appointed the Deputy Chief Minister (a post held by Sri Karpoori Thakur, leader of the SSP, in the first UF Government). Another demand which the Raja made was for the withdrawal of all the 280 cases against him which had been revived by the

Shoshit Dal Government.

For sometime, the Raja did not bargain directly, but his close friends left no doubt in the mind of the Chief Minister that if his demands were not met by the Government, he would not hesitate to walk out of the UF. Some of the constituents of the UF (CPI, for instance) were very straight-forward in condemning this pressure tactics of the Raja, some others wanted to appease him and concealed the fact from the public. For sometime even the Chief Minister went on saying that there was absolutely no crisis facing his Government. The political uncertainty became obvious to the public when on June 15-17, there were several rounds of talk between the Raja and other leaders of the UF. The local papers reported on June 24 that the Chief Minister was finding it difficult to sell his conscience to keep the Raja in good humour and he might suggest the dissolution of the Assembly after tendering his resignation. On the same date Sri Ramanand Tiwari, a SSP leader, was quoted as saying that there was no ministerial crisis at all. On June 25, Sri Bhola Shastri resigned. The letter of resignation addressed to the Governor contained the following lines: "A leader of the Samyukta Vidhayak Dal, Mr Kamakshya Narayan Singh has been pressing me directly and indirectly for the acceptance of certain conditions, the acceptance of which will go against the interest of the State and the people." The statement released to the press was more specific and categorical in mentioning the type of pressure the Raja was exerting on Sri Shastri.

Selfish Game

The resignation of Sri Bhola Shastri pointed out very clearly the difference between the character of the first UF government and the second. Sri Mahamaya Prasad Sinha had toiled his best to appease all those who, he thought, would keep him in power. He had not only encouraged defection from the Opposition by promising the defectors some office, but, in the fog end of his Chief Ministership,

passed a number of unjustified and irregular orders in the desperate hope of winning the favour of its beneficiaries. The Raja wanted to dictate terms to Sri Shastri because his group of 18 members was the decisive factor for the stability of the Ministry. The resignation exposed the selfish game of the Raja. It also pointed out that the second UF was not based on mere anti-Congressism, but it has put a premium on the interest of the public. Had it decided to stay in office in spite of the Raja, probably it could have succeeded in winning over some Congressmen to its fold, but, then, the character of the UF would not have remained the same in the eyes of the public as it is today.

The fall of the second United Front government has thrown the ball in the court of the electorate. And the public is no longer in darkness in so far as the character of different parties and individuals is concerned. It already knows that mere anti-Congressism does not pay much dividend. It knows who were the people who joined the first and second UF governments to fulfil their personal ambitions. It also knows who were the people who supported the common man on issues like granting protection to the sharecroppers, the Harijans and the Adivasis. If the people of Bihar keep these conclusions in mind and elect only those representatives who will stand by them in moments of crisis and controversies, nobody would say that the first two United Front governments have failed in Bihar. But it is the duty of the political parties in the UF to tell the electorate, with specific instances, who had been with the people and who were against it during the first two UF Governments. It is also its duty not to bargain for a few seats with those (whether inside or outside the UF at the time of the fall of the second UF Government) who are not agreeable to a common minimum economic programme.

To give a stable government to the State will be the main slogan of the Congress in the forthcoming election. But it will

not cut much ice in Bihar, for the factional fight inside the Congress is no longer a hidden secret. If they cannot give a stable executive with an elected President to their own organisation, how can they offer stability to the State administration? The stability can come only when all the Left, democratic and secular parties combine together to fight

out the Congress on the one hand and the communal forces on the other. The negative slogan of non-Congressism must be replaced by a call for the confrontation between the Socialist, democratic and secular forces on the one hand, and the reactionary and communal forces on the other. Future defection from the UF can be avoided only

when the Front selects only such candidates for the election who will selflessly stand by it in all circumstances, and not when it gives tickets to those who are important in certain localities because of the predominance of their castemen or to those who turned anti-Congress overnight simply because they are refused Congress tickets.

A NINETEENTH CENTURY FEATURE

Emigration of Indian Labour to British Colonies

PANCHANAN SAHA

EMIGRATION of indentured Indian labourers to the British sugar colonies—British Guiana, Mauritius, Trinidad and Jamaica began after the abolition of slavery in 1834. Besides Jamaica, all other colonies were acquired by England in the early nineteenth century during the Napoleonic wars. In the nineteenth century, between the years 1834 and 1900 about three-quarters of a million Indian indentured labourers were introduced by British planters into those colonies. The present Indian population in those colonies are the descendants of the introduced indentured Indian labourers.

After preliminary experiments with the cultivation of various agricultural commodities, the colonies turned towards sugar. Cultivation of sugar was found suitable and economic. Scores of cheap African slaves were employed. Capital was not wanting. Home market was secure. Therefore, after the British occupation, rapid extension of sugar cultivation took place in those colonies.

The inhuman condition of the Negro slaves attracted wide sympathy from the philanthropic and liberal elements of British society. "Abolitionist" agitation was gaining ground in England. The slave trade was abolished in 1807 and after a great deal of agitation, slavery was abolished in 1834 throughout the British Empire. The abolition of slavery hit the planters hard. The liberated slaves withdrew from plantations thus creating serious labour shortage. Available labourers were demanding "excessive" rate of wages. Now the bargaining power of labour rose high. A serious economic crisis developed in those colonies solely dependent on sugar plantations. Prices of plantations were rapidly falling. The price

of sugar in the protected Home market was rapidly increasing. A good number of British capitalist houses were also economically connected with plantations of those colonies. Hence there was a hectic search for alternative source of cheap and regular supply of labour.

The planters of West Indies tried their best to avert total ruin by introducing labourers from different countries of Europe and Asia. But the experiments failed miserably due to various reasons. Mauritius, on the other hand, due to her proximity to India, turned towards her as the alternative source of labour. Mauritius had also closer relations with India beforehand. The example of Mauritius proved to be fruitful. Other colonies followed suit.

Thus started the flow of indentured Indian "coolies" to the sugar colonies. The appalling condition of Indian labourers, both during the sea voyage, as well as in the colonies, attracted wide range of protests from India and England. The system of recruitment in India was full of abuses. Public opinion, both in India and England, became very vocal and ultimately the Government had to suspend emigration for the time being till the submission of the report of the Enquiry Commission appointed to investigate into the abuses connected with the "coolie emigration".

In spite of adverse majority report against emigration of Indian labourers, the suspension order of 1839 was withdrawn by a majority vote in the British Parliament, because the sugar planters had a strong lobby in the Parliament. Colonial interest prevailed upon Indian interest.

The sugar planters were again hard hit by the abolition of protection on sugar produced in British colonies. Due to the pressure of the newly

Dr Saha has specialised in the subject, for which he has recently been awarded D. Phil.

emerging capitalist houses in England the old "Mercantilist" policy was abandoned giving place to the policy of "Free Trade". Foreign slave-grown sugar was allowed to be imported in England. The cost of production of slave-grown sugar was less than the sugar produced in the British colonies by free labour.

Hence the British sugar planters in the colonies were again in a tight corner after the equalisation of sugar duties in the British market. Again the sugar plantations in the colonies were on the verge of ruin. In this critical situation a Parliamentary Committee was appointed to investigate into the recent crisis of sugar plantations of the colonies. The Committee after a thorough investigation recommended importation of cheap labour on a large scale to save the sugar industry there. A huge Parliamentary loan was also sanctioned to import cheap labour from India. The socio-economic condition of India was then favourable for getting cheap labour in large scale.

II

CAUSES OF EMIGRATION

WHAT was the condition of India in the period of emigration, particularly in the areas of recruiting operations? India is a vast country with various nationalities, cultures and socio-economic set-up. The period under review was also extensive. Therefore, it is not possible to find out a uniform set of causes valid for all regions and periods.

For convenience sake we can divide the whole period of emigration roughly into two halves, namely 1834-1860 and 1861-1900. The two halves had peculiarities of their own and areas of recruitment also were different.

In the first half, the main recruiting operation was mainly confined to the Chotanagpur plateau, Shahbad, Gaya, Saran and a few other districts of Bihar and Bankura, Burdwan and Beerbhoom districts of Bengal. The so-called Dhungars or "Hill Coolies" were mainly sought after.

In the second half, the recruiting operations were pushed further westward into the eastern districts of UP. The number of "Hill Coolies" gradually decreased due to various reasons giving place to the people of the settled areas of Bihar and UP.

In the Madras and Bombay Presidencies, the shifting of recruitment operations is not totally clear from the available documents. But a rough account of recruiting districts can be furnished.

As far as caste and class of the emigrants are concerned, we find among them mostly people of agricultural occupations. Among the emigrants of the settled areas besides agriculturists, we find artisans, weavers, unskilled labourers and even a few thousand high-caste sepoys. The South Indian emigrants were mostly 'panahs'. The Calcutta emigrants mostly belonged to the low and middle caste groups of Hindu society.

It is evident from the above analysis that the causes of emigration are complex. But it seems to be clear that economic pressure was the basic

cause of emigration. Economic pressure pushed thousands of such unfortunate people to the lap of the *arkatis* or recruiters. The *arkatis* dragged them away from different parts of the country.

First of all we should take up the case of the emigration of hill coolies from Chotanagpur and Bengal. It seems from various data that mere economic necessity and oppression of the landlords and money-lenders led the hill coolies to migrate. The recruiters found docile, hard-working and unprejudiced men among this class of emigrants.

But as far as the causes of emigration of settled areas of Bihar and Bengal are concerned social and economic pressure and oppressions of the landlords were not solely responsible for their emigration. There were other incidental causes also, like natural calamities, decline of handicrafts and the mutiny of the Sepoys. Pressure of population was not the main cause of emigration.

It is evident from the documents, when belated but steady industrial development began in India in the late fifties or roughly from the sixties of the nineteenth century, there arose a fierce competition for getting labour between colonial recruiters and the recruiters of tea and coffee plantations of India. Both were dependent on the same source of supply. In this period we find movement of population in two directions—colonial and inland. A brief review of the growth of industries and plantations will reveal this inland movement of population.

But the demand of labour was shortlived. The volume of employment created by the newly established industries and plantations was counter-balanced by the rapid growth of population in the recruiting areas under review, eviction of peasants from land and the declines of cottage industries. The recurrence of famines though sometime lessened the pressure of population but increased the sufferings of the poorer stratum of population more. In the famine years more people were recruited by *arkatis* than in the pre-famine years.

III

SYSTEM OF RECRUITMENT

THE most important factor to note is that emigration to the sugar colonies was not emigration of free people to the colonies like European emigration to North America or Australia. The Indian emigrants were not voluntary emigrants. They were indentured. They were recruited mostly from the countryside. Economic factors, no doubt, prepared favourable ground for recruitment.

Nevertheless the role of the *arkatis* was not secondary. There were various reasons for this. The closed society, ignorance of outside world and the sentimental attachment to the soil were some of the obstacles to voluntary emigration. Therefore, some sort of pull was necessary. Recruiters played that crucial role. Cases were many when recruiters even used unscrupulous methods of enticing ignorant people from the remotest villages drawing rosy pictures of the colonial life.

The *arkatis* were composed of various types of

people. They were paid according to the result that is according to the number of recruits by various means. They, therefore, always tried to increase the number of recruits. The method of recruitment varied according to localities and periods, class and castes of the recruits.

In the thirties and forties of the nineteenth century when emigration just began, the recruiters were engaged by some of the Calcutta firms for collecting labourers from the countryside. The Calcutta firms were acting as agents of various colonial planters. Most of the victims in this period, were the so-called hill coolies. Recruitment was connected with various abuses in this period. There were, no doubt, some formalities to be observed by the recruiters. Due to public pressure in England and India, the Government of India also put certain restrictions on colonial emigration from time to time. But those restrictions mostly remained on paper.

With the lapse of time and change of areas of recruitment and to some extent due to more government and public alertness the forms of recruitment were also changed.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century we find an elaborate network of recruiting operations spreading over the entire recruiting districts. But it is to be noted that the dependency on recruiters was not reduced in spite of minor changes of process and formalities of recruitment.

IV

CONDITION OF EMIGRANTS

PRIOR to their embarkation on ships to various colonies the recruits were put in emigration depots. There they were virtually under imprisonment. Then after some formalities, which were modified from period to period, they were put on board the vessels.

Their real ordeal now began. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the condition of the emigrants on board vessels was horrible. Though their conditions were improved in the second half of the century after a great deal of agitation, yet complaints about food, drinking water and maltreatment were frequent.

It is to be noticed in this connection, there was a difference between emigration to West Indies and emigration to Mauritius. Difference of condition is also observed between Calcutta and Madras emigrants. As a result in the first half, or the nineteenth century hundreds of unfortunate labourers died during passage. Condition of the returned emigrants was far worse.

After that tedious journey taking from two-and-half to five months and horrible experience, the emigrants reached the colonies in an emaciated condition. They were not allowed sufficient time to adjust themselves in the changed circumstances after this long and tedious journey. The period of engagement of the labourers in a particular plantation was increased to three years. During the period of short engagement the only motive of the

planters was to exploit the helpless labourers as much as possible.

Before assessing the condition of the emigrants in the sugar plantations, it is worthwhile describing in short the nature of works in the sugar plantations. From the available documents it is to be seen that the condition of emigrants varied colony-wise and period-wise. But the emigrants had to work harder in the colonies than in India. They were brutally exploited by the planters. They got no redress before the law courts. The relations between the employer and employee were strenuous.

But in spite of all this the emigrants were better off than their counter-parts in India. Their economic condition generally improved in the later part. But it too varied colonywise.

V

GOVERNMENT POLICY

WHAT was the basic attitude of the Government of India towards emigration? India was not an independent country. The Government of India was carrying out the directives of the British government generally. The Government observed a policy of neutrality, treating it as a "commercial transaction". This showed their apathy towards Indian population. They were treated as one of the component parts of production. But the Government did not remain indifferent when there was public agitation against various abuses connected with "coolie trade". However, the colonial lobby was very active in the UK. In spite of the strong recommendations of the majority members of the Investigation Committee on "Coolie Emigration", the British Parliament by a majority vote rejected the suspension order on colonial emigration.

Henceforth India was treated as a reservoir of cheap labour power. In spite of imposition of restrictions now and then to remove abuses connected with emigration, the Government of India was generally helping emigration to serve the interest of the British planters in the colonies.

But we observe a clash of interest between the colonial interest and the interest of the British capitalists in India. The Government of India was backing the British capitalists in India. In 1875 the Secretary of State for India sent a despatch to the Governor-General to encourage emigration to British colonies to lessen pressure of population from certain over-populated tracts of India. The Governor General after consulting Provincial Governors and district officials deprecated the suggestion. Here the Governor General was upholding the cause of the British capitalist interest in India rather than the interests of Indian people. The British capitalists who hardly then started some plantations and industrial undertakings in India, wanted cheap and abundant supply of labour. Encouragement to colonial emigration could harm their interests. Yet the Government of India did not ban emigration formally before 1917. They were generally follow-

ing the previous policy of "neutrality".

*

It is thus clear that Indian emigration saved sugar industries in the British colonies. It is true that emigration of three quarters of a million population

from a vast country like India had little effect on her. But it fundamentally changed the socio-economic life of the British colonies. But for their timely introduction it would have been quite impossible to achieve present standard of development in those colonies.

Public Sector and Class-Struggle

M. M. KHULLAR

At present the relationship between the public and private sectors in this country seems to have come to an impasse where the myth of a 'supplementary and complementary' role for the two sectors cannot make proper headway.

Relative inelasticity of fiscal resources for the implementation of Five Year Plans, near non-availability of deficit financing as a means of financing economic development, Plan holiday half-hearted formulation of the Fourth Plan and a tirade against planning and public undertakings by the lobbies of Big Business are unmistakable evidence of contest rather than cooperation between public and private enterprise in India.

The press and the platform are being consistently employed to completely tarnish the image of public sector in the public mind. Property as status-symbol and granting social status in production and the power to subjugate the labour of others is so fundamental an evil that no amount of redressing the social grievances through the deceptive gestures of the ruling class can harmonize the interests of the haves and have-nots. Wilfully created confusion by the vested interests can cause a postponement of social change but evolutionary process of human society cannot be completely forestalled.

Under these circumstances, the proletarian class and the petty bourgeoisie must not find it difficult to appreciate that

public sector is not merely a complex of business firms in the control of State; it is a part of the gospel of social ownership based on the 'scientific comprehension of the historical process'. In order that the class-struggle in India proceeds by the right temper and ultimately, if possible, through an evolutionary and democratic process achieves the desired socio-economic transformation, ignorance or misgivings about the public sector must be removed. It is here that the Government, intellectuals, trade union leaders and the stalwarts of the cooperative sector have a vital role to play. Apparently, plans are already afoot to ensure that ultimately reins of political power are transferred to those who shall patronise the modern bourgeoisie in the name of pragmatism. As such the principal burden of spreading true consciousness will inevitably fall on the intelligentsia guided by the perspectives of social and economic history.

Role of Public Sector

While it is true that below certain dimensions, the public sector is of no significance in the matter of class-struggle, beyond a certain magnitude in the national economy it brings into focus the class antagonisms: Uninhibited, continuous and integrated growth of public sector can resolve the antagonism between classes and will become the bulwark of economic democracy. Apart from being an aggregate

of units of production in collective ownership of the nation, the public sector needs to be viewed in the following aspects :

(i) It ensures social ownership of the means of production. "Planning on the basis of social ownership means that increasingly the whole development of society is brought under conscious control. For, the whole development of society is conditioned by the development of production". (Maurice Cornforth; *Dialectical Materialism* NBA, Calcutta 1965 pp 203)

(ii) It can provide insurance against human alienation or alienation of labour in production.

(iii) It is the means to change mastery into fellowship in industrial relations.

(iv) It acts as an antidote to false consciousness which is a "distorted mental picture of reality and its source is the alienation of man in class society." (David Caute: *Essential Writings of Marx*, London 1967, p 19)

(v) Managed with adequate political and social consciousness, it can expeditiously usher in an era of economic democracy.

(vi) It is directly subject to the discipline of socialist planning of production, and shall be free from instability and hazards of private enterprise. With private ownership "production is planned within the workshop but not in society generally." (*Ibid* 202)

(vii) It checks the evil of excessive concentration in the hands of few and consequently avoids

the absurdity of re-distribution through fiscal means. "Wealth has in the past proved even more resistant to distribution by fiscal means than has income, and it will be of value if nationalised industries do it." (*The Lessons of Public Enterprise*, Ed. Shanks, Ch. 3)

(viii) It 'deprives no man of the power to appropriate the products of society; it only deprives him of the power to subjugate the labour of others by means of such appropriation.'

(ix) It is only sure device of amicably ending the antagonism between classes. "In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end." (Karl Marx and F. Engels; —Manifesto of the Communist Party, Moscow 1949, P 74)

(x) It is not merely an expression of compassion from the oppressed class but is also a proof of "scientific comprehension of the historical process."

(xi) It is ultimately the effective threat to the harmful supremacy of wealth in human relations.

It is quite unfortunate that so far "basically public enterprises in India have not been advocated for *democratizing power* held without corresponding responsibility in the hands of few, or for increasing the *productive efficiency* of decaying industries, *safeguarding consumers* against monopoly exploitation, *protecting public interest* already in danger or for *escaping the costly burdens* of regulating private enterprise (P. Prasad, *Some Economic Aspects of Public enterprises in India*, London 1957). In view of the paternalistic attitude towards private enterprise and the growing concentration of wealth and economic power in the hands of Big Business, there are legitimate apprehensions in certain quarters that "the Indian Government was practically relinquishing nationalization as a means of anti-imperialist struggle and of rapid transfer of developmentally, strategic industries into the hands of the State..." (Ignacio Sachs, *Patterns of Public Sector in under-developed Economies*, India 1964) Again

the flight of personnel from the public undertakings and the renegade intellectuals, from among the 'petty bourgeoisie' and 'even the working class' who become the intellectual representatives of the capitalist class, pose a serious threat to the rapid growth of public sector and its emergence as a corrective factor for the inequities of the present economic system.

In this matter it would be certainly profitable to heed the warning of Karl Marx in whose judgement "the more a ruling class is able to assimilate the most prominent men of ruled class, the more solid and dangerous is its rule." (Karl Marx: *Capital*, Vol III, Ch 36)

In terms of class-struggle, conciliation to the point of betrayal by the petty bourgeoisie for the sake of their own existence and despite their loud protestations and extreme phrases creates an unpredictable element in the entire situation. Thus, while the nation has set the goal of Socialist Pattern of Society and the public sector is to move from infrastructure to the status of real dominant sector of the economy, large sections of the population being oblivious of the historical perspective make a poor preparation for the achievement of declared economic objectives.

Under the present circumstan-

ces, mobilisation of public opinion in favour of public undertakings, rapid expansion of public sector, institutional changes for an effective control over the country's material resources, including measures like nationalization of banks, stricter vigilance and control on the role of money in sabotage and subversive activities undertaken by the Big Business, ensuring absolute conformity of lingering private enterprise to goals of public policy and watchfully elect people to helm of affairs who would not swerve from the path of socialism are national imperatives that can be ignored only at great peril.

At the same time, it is of great importance that a perceptible improvement is brought about in the working of public enterprises through manning of such undertakings by men of adequate vision right perspective, sound judgement, requisite training and abilities and unmistakable dynamism. The tasks are, of course difficult but the will of people can accomplish them in case the Indian masses carry with them the awareness of challenges and do realize that public sector is not a mere conglomeration of firms, producing tangible wealth; it is one of the powerful economic symbols that carries the key to antagonism between classes regardless of aggravated animosities during the short period.

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For A Healthy Press

A WORKING JOURNALIST

THE Study Group on Newspapers set up by the National Commission on Labour has in its report drawn pointed attention to some of the basic problems inhibiting the growth of the Press on healthy lines in India today.

The most important of the observations made by the Study Group, headed by veteran journalist Sri M. Chalapathi Rau, relate to the steps that have to be taken not only to enable the small and medium newspapers to become economically viable but to end the pernicious hold of big business houses on this vital industry.

The report says in the introductory chapter: "The controversy over the growth of monopolistic tendencies in the newspaper industry and the control exercised over newspapers by other industries is among signs that within the Press as well as among the people there is awareness of the key position of the Press in the future and the need to ensure its health. The first Press Council has failed to focus attention on some of the weaknesses which have to be overcome if newspapers in India are to function entirely in the public interest..... Despite low literacy and meagre circulations, newspapers in India do command prestige, and with the growth of education their importance in public life is bound to increase. But the small newspapers' complaint that they face unequal competition remains valid, and it is not easy for independent persons without vast resources to start quality newspapers to present a different point of view."

In the chapter on "Wage

fixation and its implications" the Study Group says that it considered some related questions which have a bearing on the small and medium newspapers improving their capacity to pay over the years, and adds: "Smaller newspapers, especially language newspapers, have been complaining for years that they face unequal and often unfair competition from newspapers with vastly greater resources and that even survival becomes a matter of grim struggle. On the basis of the Press Commission's recommendations the Government attempted to correct the position by introducing a price-page schedule, but the Supreme Court struck it down. Subsequently neither the Government nor Parliament appears to have bestowed thought on this problem. The Small Newspaper Inquiry Committee also recently recommended the introduction of a price-page schedule, if necessary by amending the Constitution. There appears to be a clear case for reopening the issue and evolving a formula which will enable the small and medium newspapers to face competition on the basis of near-equality at least in terms of the quantum of reading matter made available to the reader for a certain price."

In the course of its recommendations the Group notes the glaring contrast between "the economic viability of the bigger newspapers and the difficult financial position of the smaller newspapers" and observes that the complaints from many of the smaller newspapers about the burden cast by the awards of the Wage Boards for journalists and non-journalist employees of

newspapers are in part a result of this situation. It makes particular reference to the availability of resources from outside the industry to the biggest newspapers, meaning of course those owned by the big business houses. Reintroduction of the price page schedule, the Group feels, will enable the small and medium newspapers "to build up circulation, thereby attracting a greater volume of advertisements, and become increasingly prosperous."

The Group has also recalled the Press Commission's recommendation that the space devoted to advertising in a newspaper should not exceed 40 per cent of the total available space. It says that fixation of such a ceiling will make for more equitable distribution of advertisements, helping the small and medium newspapers to augment their revenue and making them more stable. It however points out that "voluntary acceptance of a ceiling seems highly unlikely; on the other hand, any attempt at regulation is certain to be resisted by the big newspapers and the interests associated with them." The Group feels that for this purpose, as also for the reintroduction of price-page schedule, amendment of the Constitution may be necessary.

Note is also taken of the grievance of the small and medium newspapers about the quantum of Government advertising made available to them. "It is true that the Government has adopted a more liberal attitude towards these newspapers in recent times, but even so the disparity between the small and big newspapers in terms of revenue on this account remains

huge." More equitable distribution (in monetary terms) of Government advertising "will certainly go some way towards making the smaller newspapers more viable economically, and this in turn will minimise grievances about the burdens cast by regulation of wages in the industry."

As long ago as 1954 the Press Commission noticed an alarming tendency towards monopoly and concentration of ownership in the industry and suggested a series of remedial measures. In the 14 years following the Commission's report these trends have been steadily growing, and the biggest chunk of the circulation of daily newspapers is controlled by a few big business houses. The Study Group has drawn attention to one aspect of the Commission's recommendations in this regard. It says: "The Press Commission had suggested diffusion of ownership—for instance, by means of share-holding by employees—as a method for ensuring relative independence. The public trust form was also suggested, as well as cooperatives. As for the PTI, the only national news agency at that time, its conversion into a public corporation had been recommended. In view of complaints about the growth of concentration of ownership and about control of major newspapers by other industries, there is need to introduce forms of ownership which will obviate these evils. Such changes are also likely to make for better relations inside the industry and for a greater sense of participation among the employees."

The Study Group has further noted with obvious approval a suggestion that the Government should withhold or restrict certain facilities for which the industry is dependent on the Government "in the case of establishments which fail to implement the wage orders."

The Study Group has not dealt at length or in detail with these vital aspects of the newspaper industry because its main function was to make recommendations about the best ways to improve industrial relations in

the industry, and these aspects have been touched upon only to the extent they are relevant for the main purpose of the Group's work. However, the report does not leave one in doubt that leading men in the profession are feeling greatly perturbed by the inability of the Indian Press to fulfil its functions effectively in the public interest because of the control secured over the bulk of it by big business houses and other vested interests. The situation in this respect is worse today than it was when the Press Commission went into the state of the Press. But even the limited measures recommended by the Commission at that time, if implemented now, will help the small and medium newspapers to look up, and gradually eliminate the hold of business houses over newspapers. It is clear from the report that there is deep concern in the Press about the future, with the smaller newspapers finding it difficult to survive in face of unfair and unequal competition.

The Government has slept over many of the important recommendations of the Press Commission, although some suggestions like wage regulation have been implemented. Once the Supreme Court rejected the Price-Page Schedule Act the Govern-

ment and Parliament forgot about it, although the need for such regulation in order to assure the survival and growth of independent newspapers has been growing over the years. Parliament and the Government should give serious thought to these basic problems of the newspaper industry once again and take such steps as will guarantee the healthy growth of the Press. Of course, as the Study Group has indicated, constitutional objections will be raised and there will be stiff resistance from the interests which will be adversely affected. What Parliament and the Government should be concerned about is not the preservation of these vested interests and their so-called fundamental rights, but the creation of an atmosphere in which more and more newspapers can come into being and give life and meaning to democracy.

What is required, in the words of the Study Group, is "democratization of the processes of the newspaper industry itself"; and this cannot be achieved without taking the suggested measures aimed at eliminating or at least minimising the control of newspapers by other industries seeking to use these as organs for propaganda and pressure in private or sectional interest.

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Mainstream

SATURDAY, JULY 20, 1968

35 P

Moscow Pindi How Far and How Near?

Debray Doctrine

What's Revolutionary Struggle?



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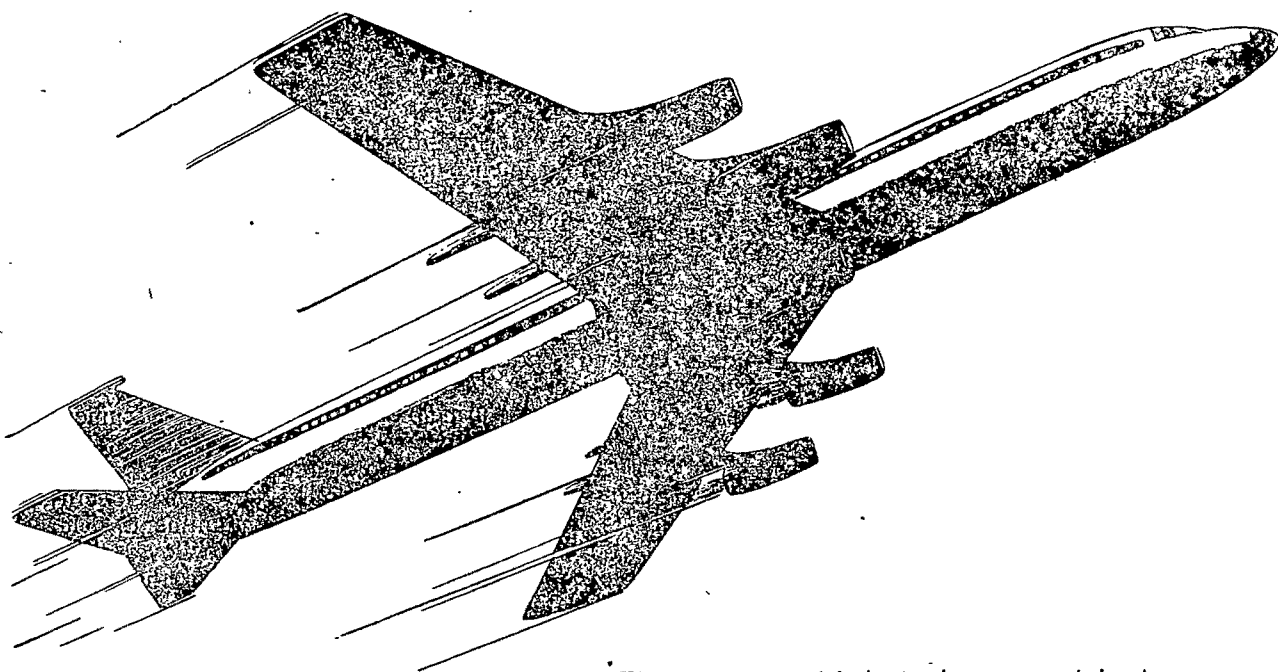
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INDIAN OIL CORPORATION LTD. - A NATIONAL TRUST FOR ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

JULY 20, 1968

INTERADS IOC-I

JUSTICE VERSUS AUTHORITY

THE AITUC Working Committee's call for united and militant mass campaigns for higher wages and more jobs highlights the basic weaknesses of economic development in the country over the last two decades, weaknesses which are reflected in the state of industrial relations not only in the private sector but also in Government establishments and public-sector undertakings.

In a few days the twentysecond year of freedom will dawn, but the dreams entertained by the working people who constitute the bulk of India's population in 1947 remain unfulfilled: the much vaunted improvement in the standard of living has been felt only by a small fringe of our 500-odd million people, while the rest have only felt a steady erosion of their already meagre real wages, thanks to the kind of economic policies pursued by the Government and the deliberate perversion of the concept and processes of planning for the benefit of the affluent few in urban and rural areas. In recent times, particularly after the Fourth General Election, employers

have been emboldened by the attitude of the Government to launch an offensive against the working people by way of closures, retrenchment, layoff etc. The gheraos in West Bengal were as much the result of this situation as strikes and demonstrations elsewhere in the country.

It does not require much argument to show that the Government has not conducted itself as the model employer whom the working people in private sector employment could site as the model in order to get their own conditions of service improved. The events in Madhya Pradesh and Bihar in the last few days provide eloquent illustration of this point. In both States what the Government employees demand is no more than honest and speedy implementation of an accepted principle. It has been conceded "in principle" that State Government employees are entitled to the same rates of dearness allowances as Central Government employees. Yet there is reluctance on the part of the two Governments concerned to fulfil this commitment. The other problem naturally worrying the Government employees in the two States is the fact that thousands of their colleagues have been rendered unemployed either due to bringing down the age of retirement arbitrarily or due to plain retrenchment. The magnitude of the problem created by Governmental action can be seen from the fact that in Madhya Pradesh 16,000 persons have been "retired" as a result of the change in the age of superannuation, while 5,000 have been retrenched and 10,000 more are said to be on the list. The position is not very dissimilar in Bihar.

In these circumstances, it is not very difficult to understand the deep unrest among the employees of State Governments. That problems of a like nature are agitating employees of other State Governments was shown by the demonstrations held in the Capital and elsewhere by representatives of 40 lakh State Government employees. The authorities, however, have so far shown little inclination to take a fair view of the problem and try to remove the root-causes of trouble. Instead, as exemplified by the Madhya Pradesh and Bihar Governments, politicians in power as well as officialdom appear to believe that strong-arm methods can solve all problems and reduce the employees to a state of acquiescence. But the repressive measures adopted by the SVD Government in Madhya Pradesh as well as by Governor Kanungo's set-up in Bihar have not so far

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had the effect of frightening the employees into giving up their legitimate demands. Nor is such a thing likely to happen in the future. Official high-handedness in dealing with what is essentially a human problem can only lead to a hardening of attitudes which in turn can only make a settlement even more difficult than it is now.

The Central Government is not behaving much better than the two State Governments referred to. The demand for a need-based minimum wage is not new; in fact, after long agitation the principle was accepted by the tripartite Indian Labour Conference twelve years back. Within days of acceptance of the concept and the relevant norms, private sector employers began to search for arguments to back out of the commitment. This was understandable, for the private-sector employers in this country are by no means known for fairness. But the Government and the public-sector undertakings also did not take the commitment seriously; no effort was made even to work out the minimum wage on the basis of needs, let alone paying such a wage. Even now, twelve years after accepting the principle, the Union Government is reluctant to let the matter go to arbitration, and does not hesitate to make use of flimsy technical arguments for this purpose. Nor is there readiness to accept arbitration on other pending questions like full neutralisation of the rise in cost of living and merger of DA in basic pay. The long-overdue revision of pay scales is also being similarly resisted.

In the case of Government employees the stock excuse offered by the Central and State Governments is lack of financial resources to meet the additional commitments involved in any upward revision of basic pay or DA. The same excuse is neatly offered in the case of the long neglected fraternity of teachers also. The question that arises is: are the working people to be penalised for the results of economic and fiscal policies in the shaping of which

the working people have had no say? Also, should economy measures be aimed at hurting only the low-paid while not the least sign of austerity is noticeable in the lives of the well-placed minority? If the Central and State Governments between them cannot work out policies aimed at mopping up the vast surplus wealth concentrated in a limited number of hands in the urban and rural areas, it is futile to expect the working people to accept this as sufficient reason for their continuing to suffer without a protest.

It does not require to be emphasised that the working people are always ready to make sacrifices in the national interest: in every crisis this country has faced it was the working people who demonstrated that they place country above self, while the capitalist class and the part of the bureaucracy tied to the aprons string of this class did not deem it necessary to change their ways. But the working people rightly refuse to be made scapegoats for the benefit of the vested interests and their agents. The rulers must realise that only a satisfied working class can provide a stable and dependable base for the growth of democracy. Such satisfaction is possible of achievement only when it is clearly seen that the policies pursued by those in power are aimed at removing inequalities and establishing a just social and economic order within a reasonable period. Unless politicians in power, in addition to finding short-term solutions to the problems of the workers in both the public and private sectors, formulate and implement radical economic policies, discontent among the people can only grow, not diminish. Not all the police powers with which Authority is armed can keep such vast discontent among the millions within bounds which they consider safe for themselves.

Justice is the only alternative to violent social upheaval, and this is what the politicians in power must realise without delay.

New Delhi Skyline

TORMENTS WITHOUT TOPPLE

THE eve of Parliament's monsoon session is marked by an unusual type of hectic activity. The challenge over foreign policy has not come for quite sometime, but this time the Right has been mustering forces for an onslaught on what it calls, the policy of kowtowing to Moscow.

It would however be a mistake to think that the attack on the Government is being mounted by only the Jana Sangh and the

Swatantra; the traditional Indian misgivings about Pakistan's adventurist politics has let many to regard the Soviet decision as a source of worry for this country. It is in this context, quite a good section of the Socialist leadership—largely those who have never been enthusiastic about India's growing relations with Moscow—has taken the initiative to raise the clamour that the Government should explore

possibilities of getting defence supplies from sources other than the Soviet Union: the difficulty of campaigning openly for US arms is the fact that this would require payment in dollars while there is no knowing that the US would make any concession since its own Asian policy is in a melting pot after the Vietnam misadventure. Among the Socialists however, a distinction is worth making: there is a strong pro-West

oriented trend in the PSP, while the SSP leadership is likely to join in this new campaign against foreign policy as a convenient handle to beat Smt Indira Gandhi with.

It is inside her own party that Smt Gandhi faces an embarrassing challenge. It is interesting to note that contrary to some reports, Sri Morarji Desai did not suggest that the President should cancel his Soviet trip because of Moscow's new decision lifting arms embargo from Pakistan. It appears to have been a suggestion at a lower level, but it was scotched almost immediately. However, there has been a tendency among some of her Cabinet colleagues to throw the blame on Smt Gandhi personally for what they seem to regard as relying over-much on Moscow.

This is almost a case of trying to make a scapegoat of Smt Gandhi for a policy which had the complete support of the entire Cabinet. What is worth noting is that during Mr Kosygin's visit to New Delhi in January last, Sri Desai was known to have taken great pains to assure the Soviet Premier that he was for public sector and for close links with the Soviet Union. The anxiety not to be marked as anti-Left has throughout been maintained by Sri Chavan. So, there has never been even a dissent inside the Cabinet from the Government's policy of close links with the Soviet Union, though it is true some people like Sardar Swaran Singh and Sri Dinesh Singh besides the Prime Minister have been more enthusiastic about it than others.

At the same time, in the Congress Party hierarchy, thanks to Smt Gandhi's critics and traducers both in Sri Desai's camp and in the Syndicate coterie, a whisper campaign could often be heard that it is the Soviet support that has been keeping her up. The prestige that Smt Gandhi's Government has earned both at home and abroad in the last one year of closer ties with the Soviet Union is no doubt in marked contrast to the discredit that overtook her Government in the wake of devaluation of the

rupee under US pressure, accompanied by the uproar over the proposed US Education Foundation and a definite slump in prestige in foreign affairs. So, today when there is a general feeling of worry over Pakistan's luck with Moscow, these frustrated politicians have been planning to attack her for having enjoyed Moscow's goodwill.

While the Prime Minister's critics are getting ready to attack the foreign policy, a peculiar complex seems to have gripped the Young Turks. In the prevailing national mood of concern at Pak's success with Moscow, they seem to be scared of being attacked for having so long been strong advocates of Indo-Soviet entente. Presumably to forestall such an attack, they are demanding full-dress debate on the new Soviet approach to Pakistan. The problem that faces them is how to draw the line; if they join in the chorus of attack on Moscow's action, would they be able to dissociate themselves from the avowedly Right clamour for a basic shift in the foreign policy and also from making a target of Smt Gandhi personally? On this last count, the Young Turks may not keep together, since some of them, as the last AICC meeting clearly showed, have other loyalties than to Smt Gandhi.

All this would no doubt touch off a big storm in Parliament, but there is little possibility of the uprooting of any tree by the storm itself. Torments galore but no danger of a topple—this sums up the reading today in the Prime Minister's political horoscope.

This is mainly because the overwhelming bulk in the Secretariat as also in the Congress have come to realise the enormity of any Masani-style suggestion for a break with the Soviet Union. Its repercussion is to be counted not merely in term of the quantum of economic assistance, the entire pattern of defence set-up leans heavily on the Socialist world. There is much talk of diversification in defence purchase. No doubt, such diversification is wholesome and is in keeping with the policy of non-alignment. At the same time,

any alienation from the Socialist world in the matter of defence equipping has in today's world become a sheer impossibility for this country.

The alternative to the present arrangement, it is realised by the wiser among New Delhi observers, is to go in for a puppet set-up of the South Korean or the South Vietnamese type, and every politician in the Capital from the highest to the lowest, knows that such a move will not be tolerated by the mute but formidable voter: the setback for the Congress in the last year's General Election was very largely because of the loss in national self-respect brought about by the Asoka Mehta-Subramaniam line of subservience to the dollar overlordship.

So, a difficult task awaits the Prime Minister next week—to let her partymen and Parliament release their pent-up feelings over Pakistan while controlling it, so that it does not break the bounds and be a threat to her own regime. It may not be as disastrous as riding a tiger but may be as hazardous as travelling in Sri Poonacha's derailed coaches.

*

WHATEVER be the excitement in New Delhi over the Soviet arms controversy, other challenges of a formidable character are going to make life miserable for the Treasury Benches. The country-wide spate of strikes among Government employees, is an ominous danger signal for the Government. The threat of direct action by the Central Government employees is gaining momentum. The tocsin is about to be sounded in Assam over the widespread discontent with the Government earning the reputation of being a ditherer.

And on all these counts, Sri Morarji Desai's quota of responsibility is perhaps bigger than the Prime Minister's. This apart, Sri Desai has to worry about the Kanti affair which is bound to come up in Parliament. Sins of the sons sometimes visit upon the fathers, most unexpectedly in the politics of this country.

July 16

N.C.

Moscow to Pindi

How Far and How Near?

FIRISHTA

*This contribution has come from a Mainstream reader
who has specialised in Pakistan affairs*

THE present excitement in India about the shift in Soviet policy towards Pakistan has to be examined in depth. It would be incorrect, as is being made out by New Delhi pundits, to think that Moscow's attitude towards Pakistan has undergone a mid-summer shift with the invitation extended to the Pakistan military mission headed by General Yahya Khan. In fact, the shift could be noticed by careful international observers for quite a long time. The decade from 1955 to 1965 has seen a sea change in world affairs. In 1955 when ebullient Khrushchov made his sensational remarks in Kashmir, one has to note that at that time the Soviet Union was trying to take counter-measures against the then American policy of encircling it with a chain of military alliances from NATO to SEATO and then on to support for Chiang Kai shek and trying to make an anti-Soviet base in Japan.

Incidentally, it is necessary for observers in India to understand that the Soviet ban on selling of arms to Pakistan had nothing to do with the Soviet stand in the Security Council with regard to the Kashmir dispute, nor was it influenced by Moscow's efforts to strengthen Indo-Soviet relation by giving massive aid, economic and military, to India. In fact, the ban on the sale of Soviet arms was imposed by Moscow on the partners of US military alliances: it was a counter-measure to the American ban on the sale of strategic material to Communist

countries. So long as Pakistan agreed to transform itself into a docile American stooge, allowing her territory to be made into a spring-board for attack on the Soviet Union, it was but natural that the Kremlin should have imposed a total ban on the sale of arms to any country subscribing to such a policy.

The lifting of the arms ban is therefore to be connected not with any change in Soviet policy towards India but to a change in Moscow's assessment about the military potentialities of the menace that Pakistan as an American satellite posed against the Soviet Union.

It is therefore to be taken for granted that the Soviet experts on Pakistan view the recent developments in Pakistan's foreign relations as marking a qualitative change from the days of Liaquat Ali Khan; a change which is sufficiently significant to merit a fresh assessment on the part of the Soviet leadership. That is, although formally Pakistan still belongs to CENTO and SEATO, the contents of its foreign policy has, in Moscow's view, practically ceased to be an effective instrument for the furtherance of US policy against the Communist countries, whether Soviet Union or China.

In this connection it is worth recalling the big Western uproar which took place when President Ayub made his first overture to China: the opening of the civil air lines by the Pakistan International Airways to Peking was viewed with considerable mis-

givings by Washington at that time. Soon after Ayub made the statement that he was prepared to use his good offices to bring about a rapprochement between China and the USA, a statement which in the prevailing state of American thinking was slightly premature. Nevertheless, it indicated in the eyes of the US State Department a very serious shift from the traditional Pakistani stand of acting as Washington's canon-fodder in its confrontation against the Communist world. Since that time, with the steady growth in Sino-Pak relations, the American plan of using Rawalpindi as a base of operations against the Communist world as a whole has become progressively infructuous.

This change in Pakistan policy towards the Communist world was itself the result of many important factors and should not be ascribed to the genius of a single personality, Ayub Khan, as is sometimes unwittingly done in the Indian press. For one thing, after the U-2 incident in 1960, there was a feeling of trepidation in Rawalpindi for getting too much involved in the American camp at the risk of making an enemy out of a very powerful neighbour. The striking advance of Soviet nuclear and rocket programme must have impressed the policy-makers in Rawalpindi about the need of cultivating the strong neighbour, particularly at a time when the Western global policy itself was suffering setback after setback in Asia. The inability of the Americans

to overpower Vietnam or to disrupt China through Chiang Kai shek, became a constant reminder to Pakistan that it would not be wise to throw in her lot entirely on the side of the Americans.

In the general weakening of the military-alliance blocs started with de Gaulle's revolt against NATO and the total incapacity of the SEATO to checkmate the advance of the Vietcong, the refusal of Japan to act as a pliant client of Washington in its military plans against the Soviet Union, the growing cooperation between India and the Soviet Union even with regard to importing military hardware, a co-operation which was long resisted by West-oriented elements in New Delhi—all these had their impact on Pakistan's foreign policy.

Initially, Ayub took the easier road to Peking than to Moscow and for very good reasons. For one thing, the American antipathy towards a stooge Government making overtures to a Communist country would have been sharper in the case of Moscow than in the case of Peking; secondly, when the Chinese took upon themselves to antagonise India, Ayub following the traditional Indo-Pak digit responded to Chinese overtures and since then with Bhutto's policy in full blast the link-up with Peking became stronger every month. In this period, roughly corresponding to the first half of the sixties, Pakistani response to Moscow's overtures were practically insignificant and certainly very restrained because it was felt by Ayub that by responding to Moscow he might incur the displeasure of both Washington and Peking.

This position changed considerably in the last few years, particularly after the Indo-Pak conflict of 1965. It may be due to several reasons. Firstly, the Chinese heroics turned out to be fulminations of a paper tiger: neither could India be overpowered, nor did the Chinese plans of extending its overseas influence from Algeria to Indonesia succeeded. In fact, the tending down of Peking's African adventure and the fiasco in Indonesia must

have had its impact on Rawalpindi. There was also the poor performance by China in coming to the support of Pakistan against India during the 1965 conflict.

Secondly, Pakistan's attitude towards America has also considerably changed. The gamble during the 1965 conflict with India was that in case of a full-fledged armed confrontation, the Western powers would respond to Pakistan's call for support; while Britain responded to it even under a Labour Government by making sharp attacks on India, the American response was much more guarded and this set in a process of disillusion among the more bellicose elements in Rawalpindi. It may be recalled that Bhutto criticised US Government arms aid to India after the Chinese attack; he said that this act "has not merely jeopardised the concept of alliance, but has shattered it." The discredit of US standing in the eyes of Rawalpindi has been much more devastating with the debacle of American policy in Vietnam; this could be seen from the comments in the very controlled press of Pakistan.

It is interesting that in this very period President Ayub chose to undertake his journey to Moscow and Pakistan's approach to Moscow became more and more pronounced. It might have begun as a lever of pressure against Washington but it has fast grown into an important axiom in Pakistan's foreign policy. Significantly Ayub got rid of Bhutto who, it may be recalled, had said in 1962 that "the military threat to us, if there is one, would come more from Soviet Union than from China".

The first signs of Pakistan's tempered attitude towards Soviet Union came with Ayub's acceptance of Kosygin's invitation to come to Tashkent and his signing of the declaration that followed in January 1966.

Tashkent is a significant landmark of Soviet diplomacy in Asia: what had so long been the preserve of the Western powers now came into the hands

of Moscow. The last round of Western attempts at mediation between India and Pakistan came in June 1965 with the British Government suggesting arbitration over Kutch. As for Kashmir, the Anglo-American mediation came to an end with the round of Indo-Pak talks on Kashmir in the first half of 1963.

In this background, Pakistan's acceptance of Kosygin's mediation at Tashkent was a significant departure from her previous habit of depending almost exclusively on Western pressure in any talk with India. Besides, Kosygin's diplomatic style itself was very different from the Western method: in every Indo-Pak dispute, the series of Western attempts had been to suggest a plan detrimental to India's stand or to propose a mediator with a definitely anti-Indian bias. In contrast, Mr Kosygin acted only as a go-between, trying to narrow down the differences and impartially acting as the coordinator of direct talks between Ayub and Shastri. This point is worth noting particularly today when there is a tendency in India to equate the present Soviet approach with the previous US stand in Indo-Pak affairs.

Tashkent Declaration was subjected to attack by Peking and quite understandably, since the Chinese Government could hardly view with equanimity any advance of Soviet influence into Pakistan. Similarly, the Western circles were also disconcerted at this successful arrival of Soviet diplomacy in the Indo-Pak sub-continent.

Since Tashkent, the Soviet Union has made headway in Pakistan. Talks on economic aid have taken place, and various delegations have been coming from and going to the Soviet Union. It is known that one common theme raised by all the Pakistani delegations whether of VIP or of lesser luminaries, has been that the Soviet Union has been partial towards India, and it is Soviet arms which had killed the Pak jawans in the 1965 war. The argument that the Soviet arms were supplied to India to defend herself against the Chinese carried little weight in Rawal-

pindi whose emissaries were reported to have frankly asked their Soviet hosts whether India needed Soviet tanks to fight the Chinese on the High Himalayas.

In fact, this was an argument which Pak propaganda laid it thick throughout the Arab world and one can easily understand the Soviet predictment on this score. Air Marshal Noor Khan's mission to Moscow last year pressed this home; and the Pakistani leaders could make a strong case against Soviet discrimination on the score of arms purchase by showing that the CENTO and the SEATO were in shambles and so far as Rawalpindi was concerned, it had permitted no anti-Soviet action since the 1960 U-2 episode. The demand for the removal of the US intelligence base at Badaber might have been met by the Pak authorities not agreeing to renew the lease this year.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union's need for keeping her southern front friendly and neutral has assumed fresh urgency. The Western front is ringed with the 20-year old NATO, which despite Moscow trying to make a few dents—facilitated by De Gaulle's anti-US stand—still remains an armed bettlement. Now, a new front of hostility has come up in the east with the growing intransigence of the Mao regime in China. It is significant that Moscow's fears about Chinese adventurism against the Soviet Union have grown in recent months. With the US debacle in Vietnam, the make-friends-with-Peking school is bound to be strengthened in Washington, and there is every likelihood of this becoming part of the US policy after the US Presidential election in November. The strategy of this school in America as worked out by its adherents in the State Department and the Pentagon—is that China can be humoured and through this means, the Soviet Union with its huge arsenal of nuclear bombs and rockets can and must be isolated.

Against this new danger of encirclement, Moscow's counter-measures are necessarily concentrated on the southern front.

It is worth noting that in the last two years in particular, the Soviet Union has been making extra efforts to win over the Arab world. This could be seen in a comparatively minor instance: even with powers with whom the Soviet Union has got very angry relations, such as China, West Germany or the USA, there has never been any break in diplomatic relations, but in the case of Israel, this rule was waived and as an obvious gesture to the Arab world, Moscow broke diplomatic relations with Tel-el-Aviv.

This region is not only the soft under-belly of the Soviet Union but also the gateway to Africa. With the US fiasco in South East Asia it is possible that the next American grapple can come off in this theatre round Indian Ocean. And this is also the world of oil, which feeds the military machine of every power: although the Soviet Union is self-sufficient in oil, it has to see to it that the Middle-East oil does not fall into the hands of her potential adversaries.

It is in this background one can understand the Soviet anxiety to placate Pakistan. An Indian newspaper has banteringly asked if Moscow found Ayub Khan more Left than Indira Gandhi: this can be counterposed by asking if the Shah of Iran is more left than Ayub; since according to present indications, Iran may be getting Soviet arms. The point is not a question of a Government becoming Left; it is a matter of the Soviet Union trying to have a ring of friendly States on her southern border. And the efforts at making friends extend upto Turkey with her membership of NATO.

A question that is often posed nowadays is: what is the difference between the US strategy vis-a-vis the Indo-Pak subcontinent ten years ago and the present Soviet approach? Is not Moscow following in the footsteps of Washington and will it not meet with the same disastrous consequences?

The difference between the two strategies is basic. Even if one dismisses the ideological point that one is a socialist power and the other an imperialist

power, one cannot get away from the reality itself. Washington's strategy at the height of the cold war with Dulles policy dominating was that Pakistan was to be made into a military base of operations for the West. (Incidentally, the US gave massive arms aid free to Pakistan as part of the military-alliance deal, while the latest Moscow concession is to let Pakistan buy Soviet arms on cash-and-carry basis; with the poor turn-over of Pak-Soviet trade, the scope for buying Soviet arms is thus very much restricted in the case of Pakistan).

The US policy of military alliance with the Pakistan actually helped to accentuate Indo-Pak tension because (a) a massive arms accumulation came in the hands of Rawalpindi free of cost and services; and (b) the US policy officially denounced India's non-alignment and boosted Pakistan's adherence to America's military bloc. In other words, Dulles almost wrote off Nehru's nonaligned India, and pinned his entire hope on Pakistan, with its US military base and its CIA-operated U-2 operation centre.

In contrast, the Soviet policy has been for maintaining stability in this region for Moscow's own interest. A tension-spot on its southern fringe can easily turn into a happy hunting ground for both USA and China, it fears. Instead, if stability could be maintained in this subcontinent, with ties of amity and economic and defence support strengthened with both India and Pakistan, it will help to promote Moscow's enlightened self-interest.

From this point of view, the urgency of meeting the Pak complaint about arms embargo was no doubt pressing for Moscow: equally important would it be to see for it that the relations with India, built through years of effort, are also maintained and strengthened.

Kosygin is known to be unorthodox but cautious in his foreign policy approach; he demolishes traditional barriers without being a gambler. Glassboro was not Camp David, but he was equally firm in support of Nasser in 1968 as Khrushchov

(Continued on Page 37)

Checkmate in the Desert

A. S.

PRESIDENT Nasser's visit to the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia was perhaps the most significant development in the West Asian crisis since Glassboro. It revealed the failure of UN peace envoy Gunar Jarring's efforts to find out a peace formula or arrange talks between the adversaries.

It is likely to give a new shift to the Soviet and American attitudes on the Arab-Israel issue and may lead the Arabs to reappraise their position. Israel has never been keen on either a 'political solution' or a 'peace settlement' since it knew that either of them would result in the reduction of its size and put a premium on its expansionist ambitions. The Glassboro spirit might not outlive President Johnson and after his disappearance from the American political scene, the powerful Zionist lobby is likely to frustrate any Western effort to put an end to the stalemate.

The Pentagon announcement of the sale to Israel of anti-aircraft Hawk missiles was deliberately timed to remind Nasser's hosts in Moscow that the occupied Arab territory would not be easily given up. And before Nasser reached home news was leaked that Israel would have no difficulty in procuring 50 supersonic F-4 Phantom jet fighter-bombers to add to the country's offensive potentialities.

Though there was no likelihood of a sudden restoration of normalcy the Egyptian side had employed all its diplomatic skill to give an impression that Cairo would welcome any peaceful settlement leading to the pre-June position. While Nasser was on his way to Moscow his

Foreign Minister Mahmud Riad told reporters in Copenhagen that his country "accepted realities and one of them is Israel. We only want peace." The Riad declaration was promptly clarified in Cairo. An official statement said that it was a crude distortion of the Foreign Minister's views. Next day again a Government spokesman in Cairo acknowledged the 'existence' of Israel but added this did not mean that such existence had a legal or moral basis. Which Israel, he asked a crowd of Western reporters, the Arabs are urged upon to recognise? "Before we recognise a state we must know where it is. We do not know where Israel is, since it has been adding lands to its territory by conquest. What is Israel? Is it the two and a half million Jews now in Palestine or is it the 12 million Jews all over the world as Moshe Dayan said?"

The Egyptians have stubbornly stuck to the November 22 Security Council Resolution which seeks the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the occupied Arab territory knowing that in no circumstances Israeli leaders will risk to comply with it. The chauvinist feelings in Israel are whipped up to such a degree that an inch of Arab territory would create a grave situation in the country. The dream is *Eretz Israel*—Greater Israel—of the Biblical concept. No Israeli political or religious group has even ventured to suggest openly the return of any part of the occupied territory except the local Communist Party. In Israel it is difficult to separate religious illusions from political ambitions.

But it appears the Egyptians

have successfully launched an impressive post-war diplomatic campaign against Israel. President Nasser repeated in public what he had said at a Moscow State banquet that in taking the road of peace "we are winning friends on our side". A political solution, he said, could well be a substitute for military means "to our ends". But his attitude hardened after the news of the Hawk missiles and he announced at a Kremlin luncheon that the Arabs were determined to liquidate the consequences of the Israeli aggression whatever the cost. He was against peace based on status quo—it amounted to surrender. The chances of peaceful solution are thus very slender. Both the Arabs and the Israelis seem to get ready to enter into a arms race making another confrontation almost inevitable.

While the Arabs get ready for another war the people are becoming more enthusiastic about the guerrilla activities that the Palestinian commandos have begun. Earlier, Cairo's attitude was to discourage them and both the Syrian and the Jordanian Governments were reluctant to permit them to use their territory as a base. But now Cairo and Amman radios broadcast regular programme to highlight their activities and glorify their achievements. Large number of Palestinian youth settled in these countries are now permitted to join their ranks. The Arab leaders and particularly Nasser have no illusions about the success of the "guerrilla war" since both the people and the terrain are not fit for such a

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A. P. GOVERNMENT'S BLACK CIRCULAR

Blatant Misuse of Power

A WORKING JOURNALIST

WE have reason to be grateful to the Government of Andhra Pradesh. By its action in denying advertisements to 19 newspapers it has shown clearly that the fears entertained by the press and the public that any policy can be twisted and distorted to suit the convenience of those in power and to apply pressure on fearless critics are fully justified.

Not much is known about the quality and content of a few of the 19 newspapers; but certainly a great deal is known about the policies in furtherance of which two of the affected newspapers—*Patriot* and *Link* newsmagazine—were started and are being conducted. These two are among the ones feared most by the communal forces in the country which have therefore sought to vilify and denigrate them wherever possible. Even when Leftist parties aligned themselves with communal parties before and after the Fourth General Election with the aim of dislodging the Congress from power, these two Leftist newspapers made no secret of their dislike of such unhealthy alliances which could only lead to a strengthening of the forces of communalism and reaction. Another of the newspapers to which the Andhra Government has denied advertisements is the *Andhra Jyoti* whose editor, Sri Narla Venkateswara Rao, is the doyen of Telugu journalists; his contribution to the national movement was recognised by the Congress Party by making him a member of the Rajya Sabha.

The action taken by the Andhra Government has been widely condemned not only by progressive elements in national life but even by moderates who value freedom of expression in a democracy of our kind. It has been widely recognised that the action has nothing to do with communalism but is merely the misuse of power in a blatant attempt to suppress criticism. There can be little doubt that the action is entirely arbitrary. It also represents the contempt the Congress rulers of Andhra Pradesh have for universally accepted norms of democracy. Congressmen in power in that State have decided that they will not tolerate criticism in the Press of their doings which have not always been above board. And they have thus enabled the public and the men in the newspaper industry to remember that the danger to press freedom does not emanate only from the powerful industrialists who have invaded the Press and secured a grip over it in the last two decades and more. Small and medium newspapers, particularly those started by dedicated groups bent upon resisting the growth of Big Business and vested interests on the one hand and the exercise of power against the interests of the common people by those in authority on the other, have to struggle against great odds: Big Business is in a position to choke off the flow of advertisements to such newspapers; so are the Central and State Governments. So far the misuse of this power to refuse advertisements has been

cautious and secretive, so far as the State Governments are concerned. Now the Andhra Pradesh Government has done it in the most brazen manner.

The decision of the State Government to 'punish' *Patriot* and *Link* is not difficult to understand. These two newspapers gave the maximum publicity to the inhuman treatment meted out to Harijans in rural Andhra Pradesh. They published remarks against Harijans and those giving publicity to their cause reportedly made by a Minister to a group of journalists. They exposed the reluctance of the State authorities to move quickly to punish the perpetrators of heinous crimes against Harijans in the villages. They refused to be cowed by the kind of tactics adopted by the State Chief Minister to obtain written statements individually from obliging journalists in order to make out that the newspapers concerned had not published the truth. The State Government's move to describe the two newspapers among others as "communal" ones and deny them Government advertisements is the answer of power-drunk politicians to honest journalists who will not allow them to play with the lives of the people well outside the glare of publicity.

It is ridiculous to imagine that pressure tactics of the kind adopted by the Brahmananda Reddy Government can or will deflect honest professional men from their legitimate task of relentlessly exposing wrongdoing
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Can A Country Have More Than One Communist Party?—IV

S. A. DANGE

X

38 Though Lenin had expressed his position strongly and called for the Third International in 1914, he did not act unilaterally. He waited to rally the forces loyal to Marxism and to the resolutions of the Second International. He proposed the formation of a new International formally in the Kienthal Conference of 1916 but as we have seen, it was not accepted. Even then, he did not act only on the support of the Bolsheviks and the Zimmerwald Left. Before, however, he could make his next move, the Russian Revolution took place which not only fulfilled the Stuttgart and Basle resolutions but gave a new impetus to the revolution in Europe and roused the peoples of the colonies to fight their liberation struggles. *But by then it had become impossible to resurrect the Second International.*

Upto 1914 it had still been possible for all opposing trends and sections, from the Fabians to the Bolsheviks to be in a single International. Because, the differences and divisions were in the realm of theory and debate. Though they were vital yet they had not come out and ranged themselves as opposing forces of revolution and counter-revolution, as happened after 1914 and especially after the Russian Revolution.

Now the differences took such a form that Henderson, the socialist and leader of the Second International in the Coalition Cabinet of the British, hanged Connolly, the Irish Communist leader, for daring to organise an uprising against the British rule. Similarly the Social Democrats of the Second International, Scheidemann and Noske, who had come to power in Germany, murdered Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. And the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries in Russia had openly joined with the counter-revolution to make war on the Soviet Revolution and tried to assassinate Lenin. Thus to speak of unity in a single "Socialist" organisation had now become impossible.

39. When the German Revolution broke out in November 1918 and the German Communist Party was founded in December 1918, the task of bringing together the Communist forces became urgent

and a call to meet was given. On January 24, 1919 the invitation to the Foundation Congress of the new International was sent in the name of six Communist Parties (Russia, Poland, Hungary, Austria, Latvia and Finland), the Balkan Revolutionary Social Democratic Federation and an individual representative of the Socialist Labour Party of the United States. It was addressed to thirtynine organisations or groups, including all Communist Parties, five Socialist or Social Democratic Parties and nineteen Left minorities within the Socialist Parties or militant industrial groupings.

Such a mixed composition of the invitees may surprise us today but it was inevitable in the conditions of the movement then and the traditions of the Second International which had to be reckoned with.

40. The First Congress of the Communist International was held in Moscow on March 4-7, 1919.

The Congress was attended by representatives of eleven Communist Parties, five Socialist Parties, and some three industrial groupings. Besides this there were observers without voting rights from a number of countries, including France, Czechoslovakia, China, Persia, Turkey, etc.

The Congress launched "An Appeal to the Workers of All Countries" which became known as the "New Communist Manifesto". It adopted the *Platform of the new International* setting out in clear terms the principles of revolutionary Communism, carrying forward the theory of Marxism or Communism in the era of the general crisis of capitalism and opening of the world socialist revolution. It clarified the basic questions of capitalist democracy and dictatorship, and working-class democracy and dictatorship. It showed the necessity to break with social-chauvinism. A provisional Executive Committee of seven countries and regions was appointed and the finalisation of the constitution was left to the Second Congress. The term *Social-Democrat* was abandoned and the term *Communist* was adopted purposefully for all parties.

The Revolution in Russia and Germany, soon to be followed by the one in Hungary, as also the rising mass movements in Britain, France etc. drew the masses of Europe and the world towards the ideas of the Communist International. One of its most outstanding features that demarcated it from the Socialist International was its call for the *emancipation of*

The previous instalments of this thesis covering upto Section IX were published in Mainstream, June 1, July 6 and 13, 1968.

the colonies. Its appeal said:

"The Communist International breaks once and for all with the tradition of the Second International, for whom in fact only white-skinned people existed. The task of the Communist International is to liberate the working people of the entire world. In its ranks the white, the yellow and the black-skinned peoples—the working people of the entire world are united."

41. The popularity of the Communist International tempted many in the Second International to ask for joining it. Some did it, thinking it would be only an amended edition of the Second International after the first flush was over. For them the Second International was too discredited to go back to. Some came without any precise idea of the future developments. Even some trade union organisations also applied for affiliation.

To admit all these would have led to the dilution of the revolutionary tasks that confronted the working-class. Hence at the Second Congress, when the Statutes were drawn up, they gave clear expression to the revolutionary aims, the practical obligations and the basic principles of international discipline and democratic centralism as binding on all the Parties of the International. At the same time, to stop the flood of opportunists entering it *Twenty one Conditions of Admission to the Communist International* were adopted, which laid very precise conditions as being obligatory on all Parties of the International as also individual members of Parties, affiliated to it.

42. *With these conditions, a new type of Communist Parties were built throughout the world guided from a commonly accepted, democratically elected, world centre, that is the Communist International.* The Statutes of the new International sought to make a break with the loose and impotent federalism of the Second International, which had ended in disaster, and to return to the principle and methods of "a strongly centralised organisation" as the First International. It said, "*The Communist International in fact and in deed be a single Communist Party of the entire world.*"

XI

43 "Workers of the World Unite" said the Manifesto in 1847. The working-class of the whole world is a class which is homogeneous, which has no basic contradictions within itself. It is exploited as a whole by its opposite, the international alliance of capital throughout the world. Hence, comes the internationalism of the proletariat and all the obligations following from it. Hence, the leadership of this internationally exploited class must be one single united international organisation, one single-minded "General Staff" of the world revolution against the rule of capital, each national detachment of the class and its national leadership being only a section of a single world army led by the world organisation of international Communism. Such was the concept, whose embodiment was the Communist International.

44. The establishment of the Communist International inspired the revolutionaries throughout the

world and Communist Parties rose in many of them, The formation of the Party in India was directly inspired by the Communist International.

Henceforth all the Parties, who came to the International were named as Communist Party of such and such country. Each party, when admitted into the International by its Executive (ECCI) described itself as a "Section of the Communist International" and abided by the discipline of the Communist International (CI).

No party, which insisted on calling itself Communist Party, but was not affiliated to the CI was recognised as a Communist Party by the Communist throughout the world.

45. How were the decisions taken and differences and controversies settled? Every problem was discussed by the ECCI. The inner-party controversies of all affiliated parties whether of political, ideological or organisational nature were submitted to the ECCI and finally to the World Congress of the International.

In those days, almost all Communist Parties in the world were illegal and even where they were legal their members were prosecuted and sent to jails. Every strike, every uprising, every discontent of the people was ascribed to the "secret hand of Moscow", that is the Communist International. We were all called "agents of Moscow". Despite independence in India and in many other countries, things have not changed much, so far as the tactics and attempts of the ruling-classes against the Communist Party are concerned.

46. The Imperialists of the world did not allow the Russian people and the Soviet Government to rule and reconstruct their country as they chose. As everyone knows, fourteen countries, including Britain, France, Germany, USA, Japan, etc. invaded the Soviet Union, with the help of the counter-revolutionary, dethroned landlords and capitalists of that country. But the Red Army of workers and peasants fought them back and the sympathies of the working people of the whole world rallied for the defence of the First Workers' State in the world. Defence of the Soviet Union was one of the international duties of every Communist Party in the world.

47. In spite of illegality, white terror, the failure of revolutionaries in Germany, Hungary, etc. and the rise of Fascism in Italy and the temporary retreat of the revolutionary tide, the Communist International and the affiliated parties met in their Congresses. All questions were freely debated. They were also reported in the press. A regular paper called the *Communist International* and the *International Press Correspondence* (Imprecor) published the speeches, resolutions, debates and finally even the votes cast in the Congresses of the CI.

Such was the democratic functioning and centralism of the Comintern, the world organ of the Communist movement.

The result was that every party had the confidence of the backing of the whole world movement. Every party had a forum where to discuss things and test their validity. The World Congress of the CI that is of the world parties, had the authority and

democratic sanction to tell which one was a Communist Party and which was not and who was right and who was wrong. We had all evolved a world forum, world organ, a world centre and authority of Marxism-Leninism, based on democratic centralism, a free discussion, a free vote and voluntary discipline with the majority opinion prevailing over the minority.

XII

48 The Communist International belonged to a new epoch, in which Marxism had ceased to be a question of only debate, propaganda and polemics. It had become a burning theory of revolutionary action and one-sixth of the world had a workers' state run according to the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism.

Revolutions in several countries and the Communist Parties participating in them had to have the advice, help and guidance of the CI. The Chinese Revolution was directly assisted by the CI. The Soviet Government rendered the revolution all possible aid that it asked for through Sun Yat-Sen and through the Communist Party. And when the first revolution failed due to Chiang Kai Shek's betrayal the matter was debated in the CI as well as the CPSU for days together. A reading of the debates of those days will tell you how the Trotskyite opposition in the CI and CPSU thundered and accused Stalin and the CI of having betrayed the Chinese Revolution. There you will understand how the left-adventurists of today, the modern Trotskyites hurl the same charges and phrases at the CPSU in relation to Vietnam, Cuba and the liberation wars.

49. Such important and vital questions had to be decided by debate and a vote. The matter could not be left to a mere "consensus", in which even one or a handful of parties and individuals could prevent any decision being taken unless the whole majority agreed to their particular point. Revolutionary parties cannot decide things by consensus, which is a method suitable for a heterogeneous assembly, which in the absence of adherence to an accepted ideology and philosophy and in the absence of the possibility of a clear-cut decision by majority, chooses to tide over difficulties for the time being by the *electic method* of the consensus.

50. Another notable feature of the CI was that in conditions when revolutionary action and counter-revolutionary attacks were so seriously on and when everyone was intent on discussing and deciding the right line for action among all the Parties, little was heard of the question—whether all parties are "equal and independent". All parties were sections of the single world centre of revolution that is the CI, and all sections had common duties and obligations and rights. Where then was the necessity to debate the question of equality and independence? Can different divisions of an army of the world revolution be asked whether they are equal and independent? If such were the case, what remains of the world revolution, of proletarian internationalism, of the "General Staff" and the whole concept of the science of Marxism-Leninism and revolution?

The concepts of equality and independence are validly raised and debated when relations between two opposite classes are under question. But what do these things mean between one Communist Party and another, between one Communist and another when both belong to the same exploited class? The relations established by acceptance of the philosophy and organisational principles of Marxism-Leninism lift all the Communists into a new world of relations in which *equality is implicit and independence of judgement and thinking is accepted*. But if the judgement of one conflicted with that of another or the whole, then it is subjected to the common judgement of all and *enforced by the democratically accepted discipline of the whole*, of which each Communist and each Party is only a part. That was how the CI thought, how Lenin and the Bolsheviks thought.

51. In the Communist Party or the International, if an argument arose over the tactics to be followed in a given situation, will not the experience of a party like that of the Soviet Union count in influencing the decision? If some one casts a vote by taking into account how the CPSU thinks, or how the Chinese or Vietnamese think, is that a surrender of your independence and equality? The vote is perfectly equal in the sense that the party of San Marino or Haiti or India has just that one vote, which in number is equal to the one vote which the Party of the Soviet Union or China has. *But equality of a vote does not mean automatic equality of wisdom, experience and capacity*. But in international conferences in the recent days when someone voted with the CPSU, the modern splitters at once raised a howl that there was no equality and independence and that the "baton" of one party and one country was ruling the conference opinion. And yet those splitters are brazen-faced enough to teach us that the Thought of One Person that of the Almighty Mao enlightens the whole world and solves all problems, whatever may be the opinion of the overwhelming majority of Parties.

52. In the days of the CI and its democratic centralism and revolutionary discipline, there was the right to differ and argue within the framework of the CI and Party rules. People argued and differed even with Lenin. But the right to differ did not confer the right to split. And if you did differ and

CORRECTION

In the third instalment of S. A. Dange's article, "Can A Country Have More Than One Communist Party?" (*Mainstream*, July 13, 1968), two serious printing mistakes need to be corrected:

- On Page 16, Column 1, Sub-section 34, para 1, last sentence: instead of "It is not a platform.....", read "It is a platform"
- On Page 16, Column 2, Sub-section 37, para 3, last sentence: instead of "These schemes have had their effects...", read "These *schisms* have had their effects..."

still wanted to be Communist, you had to submit to the CI verdict, its authority and its majority opinion. No party which put itself outside the pale of the Comintern was recognised as a Communist Party, whatever be the name it adopted.

53. Hence in those days it was easy to decide who was the Communist Party. *Hence in those days, there could not be more than one Communist Party in a country.* If two or more Parties claimed to be Communist Parties, only the one which was declared as "section of the CI" could have the status of the Communist Party.

Nowadays, when there is no more a Communist International what standard, what organisational principle is there to decide which is or is not the Communist Party of a given country? Who or what is to decide which Party is the "official" Party and what is the agency or sanction to label one as "Official" and the rest "non-official", if such terminology is permitted?

Let us take the case of our Party and the cases of some other parties in those days and see how the CI dealt with them.

(To be Continued Next Week)

Reorganisation and Re-integration of Assam

B.P. CHANGKAKATI

THE problem of reorganisation of Assam first came to the forefront with the demand for separation of the hill areas from Assam made by a section of the hill leaders in 1953 before the States Reorganisation Commission.

The creation of a separate State for Nagaland in 1962 gave it a further fillip. Since then the problem is being discussed and measures suggested on different occasions to meet the aspirations of the hill people. Of late, the problem has become so complicated and explosive after the Government of India's declaration of January 13, 1967 that any further delay in arriving at a proper solution may prove disastrous. On the basis of history and realities as I could feel as a layman I would like to present below my point of view of the problem and its solution for consideration by the people of both the hills and the plains.

Ancient Assam, that is, Assam before its conquest by the British, was always an independent and sovereign state comprising mainly the plains of the Brahmaputra valley. The British after

the conquest of the hill areas of the Brahmaputra basin, tagged these areas with plains of the Valley to constitute the Province of Assam mainly for administrative convenience.

With the independence of India, the province of Assam with the Khasi States and the Assam Tribal Areas constituted the State of Assam as one of the fourteen States of the Union of India.

Thus before the advent of the British, the hill areas used to be independent territories lying side by side with ancient Assam as either friendly states or its protectorates. The British loosely put together these elements as a single unit without caring for their proper infusion or homogeneous integration. After Independence with the formation of the State of Assam, the people and the Government made great strides to weld together all these different elements to make Assam wholly integrated, strong and prosperous.

Unfortunately, all the efforts and the high hopes of the people of the Plains of Assam could not bring about the desired integration and the first stage of its disintegration started with the separation of the administration of NEFA soon after attainment

of Independence and the creation of Nagaland State after some years. Naturally these actions encouraged the other hill areas to raise claims for separate Statehood, and with time every clan or tribe whether of the plains or of the hills is now claiming complete autonomy or separate States. Matters have come to such a pass now that it is today virtually beyond the competence of anybody that real integration or welding of the different elements or areas is possible without first separating completely these elements from each other and reintegrating or rewelding them along proper lines to have a integrated and homogeneous region.

The topography and the climate of the hill areas are completely different from those of the plains and the approach to their economic development is rather different. It should be quite desirable to separate the hill areas from the plains and to allow their people to manage their affairs according to their own genius.

Apart from the point of view of national security of this sensitive region of the Union, the different areas, however, for their mutual benefit must function as one integrated region in respect of matters of common interest. The

The author is Retired Chief Engineer, PWD (Flood Control & Irrigation Wing) Assam.

people of the plains of Assam who except for a small period of slightly more than a century used to be independent and sovereign cannot be expected to be satisfied with any status lower than atleast that of statehood of the Union of India. Even after the separation of the hill areas, the State of Assam must continue to be one of the constituent states of the Union of India as before. The hill areas may either be transformed into one or more Union territories or even made into separate State if financial and other considerations justify such an action, subject to the condition that they will constitute a regional federation with the State of Assam to maintain integrity of the region and for administration of national and common affairs of these territories on the basis of equality amongst them.

Amendment of the Constitution

The Constitution should be amended to provide for the formation of regional federations of States for administration of national and common affairs of the region on the basis of equality amongst the States. All the States will have equal rights and privileges in the affairs of the Federal Government. This equality is to be secured by giving proportional representation to the States in the Federal organs on the same analogy of representation of the States in the Union organs. There should be a federal legislature, the members of which should be elected on the basis of adult franchise. The Executive should comprise of a Head of the Federation, a Council of Ministers and an Advocate-General.

The territories which will enjoy statehood will have full and sovereign jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to all the subjects of List II of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution as far as they are confined only to the territory concerned and no other territory of the Federation is interested therein. Subjects of common and national interest such as Border Security, Immigration, and Infiltration; Tourism; Inter-state Communication (such as National

Highways, other highways connecting two or more territories of the federation and Interstate Highways); Control of Rivers and their basins, floods of which affect more than one territory or whose waters command more than one territory for navigation and for irrigation purposes; Hydro-Electricity for inter-State consumption; Major Industries; Inter-state Trade and Commerce; Foreigners in the region; prohibition; and such other subjects which may be found to be of national and common interest of the region—all these will be the responsibility of the Federal Government. Union Territories within this federation will have full and sovereign jurisdiction over such subjects of the List II of the Seventh Schedule as may be decided by the President of India, and the rest of the subjects of this list for these territories will be administered by the Federal Government. The Federal Legislature may function as a legislature subsidiary to the Parliament in respect of matters where the Union may be required to exercise control over the States in cases of emergency and take over the administration of any State under the authority of the President as provided for in Articles 356 and 365 of the Indian Constitution.

Common Facilities

To ensure and expedite integration of different peoples of the region, the High Court, the Public Service Commission and the Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board should be common for all territories of the region.

There will be a pool of officers of the Class I Services of the different territories under the control of the Federal Government, to which 50 per cent of the total cadres of such Services of all States or Territories of the Federation will be deputed for placing under Governments of other Territories to create a sense of oneness of the entire region.

Different Territories will have their boundaries same as the present boundaries of the Districts or Subdivisions that will

constitute these Territories, and there will be no question of adjustment of boundaries anywhere on any consideration whatsoever it might be. Any area or locality of appreciable size in any Territory, the majority of whose people belongs to the communities of another Territory will be administered by the Federal Government if they so desire; but under no circumstances these areas will be allowed to come under the Territory of these communities as enclaves or by adjustment of boundaries.

The Expenses

The expenses of the Federal Government will be met by levy of taxes and from contributions from the Centre and the constituent Territories.

The Head of the Federation shall be a personage of the rank of the Vice-President of the Union. This regional federation may comprise of, for the present, all Territories that were included within British Assam and may be known as *Jukta Asom*.

Formation of a regional federation has been suggested purely for the convenience of economic development of different areas having common interests but whose topography and climate demand formation of different autonomous units for management of their affairs according to their own genius. Race, Tribe, Clan, religion, language, or historic background shall not be of any consideration for formation of different autonomous units. These factors do not stand in the way of economic development or management of the common affairs of a community having more than one of these elements. On the other hand, if these factors are taken up as criteria there will be no limit to such considerations, and this will ultimately bring about the complete disintegration of the whole region.

Formation of such federations seems desirable on similar considerations for other regions in the whole of India. These regions should be formed mainly basin-wise, basing on the principal rivers of the country.

The Debray Doctrine

BHOWANI SEN

REGIS Debray is a young French philosopher who thinks that his visits to Cuba has thrown a new light on his understanding about Marxist-Leninist concept of Revolution in its application to the countries of Latin America. It is not for us to decide what form of struggle suits the concrete situation existing in any or all the Latin American countries but the thesis propounded by Regis Debray can be examined in so far as it contains certain general principles irrespective of any specific situation that may exist in the countries mentioned above. Debray has elaborated his views in the book *Revolution in the Revolution**.

At the very outset it is necessary to underline that Debray does not like Trotskyism, which is characterised by him as follows: "As bottom Trotskyism is a metaphysic paved with good intentions.....Because Trotskyism, in its final state of degeneration is a medieval metaphysic.....Has anyone ever seen a concrete analysis of a concrete situation from the pen of a Trotskyist?"

From this correct characterisation of Trotskyism one may expect a concrete analysis of the concrete situation prevailing at present in the Latin American countries instead of basing oneself on the history of Cuban revolution as narrated by a single leader and then generalise the so-called experience of the same for all the Latin American countries in the year 1967 when he wrote his

book *Revolution in the Revolution*? That is precisely what he has not done.

Let us now proceed to examine Debray's outlook and see how it looks.

He has dealt with armed guerilla struggle as the immediate form of struggle for the Latin American countries and refuses to examine whether the masses of the people (most of whom are toiling peasants) are already in a mood to accept its justification; whether any class alliance is required for it, or whether such a revolutionary crisis is already manifest as to make armed guerilla struggle the inevitable path, the only form of struggle open to the people in order to liberate their countries from American Imperialism and the internal reactionaries. But the concept of "people" is alien to the Debray doctrine.

After having discussed the question whether propaganda and political education is necessary for armed struggle, Debray says: "if the peasants are sceptical, their confidence in themselves must be restored by imbuing them with revolutionary faith, faith in the revolutionaries who are speaking to them". Debray, then, arrives at the conclusion that "armed propaganda follows military action but does not precede it". He further explains that "The main point is that under present conditions, the most important form of propaganda is successful military action".

Debray, the author of the book *Revolution in the Revolution*? does not profess that the people of the Latin American countries have already been politically convinced that the armed

guerilla struggle is now the only form of struggle that can liberate their countries. On the contrary he is of the opinion that "conflict with outside political forces—parties or organisations—arise and are intensified. Such forces, far from being convinced and won over by the guerillas' experience and enthusiasm, see their suspicious confirmed in this form of people's struggle; they give voice to their formerly silent disapproval and begin to discuss it openly." Therefore—"real revolutionaries" must have no truck with such demoralising activities as political controversies with Parties and personalities. Because, who are these "outside forces", Debray refers to? Certainly not the imperialists and their henchmen unless all those who do not agree with Debray are characterised as imperialism's henchmen; these so-called "outside forces" are parties and organisations outside the monolithic unit, the so-called "foco" of guerilla struggle. It is not denied that they have also supporters among the masses and also claimed that they are not utopians having nothing to do with the people. But the people cannot be won over by political propaganda and agitation, masses following others are to be won by successful armed guerilla struggle. Therefore "armed propaganda follows military action but does not precede it."

In other words, Debray is of the opinion that armed action must begun somehow by some people already convinced about it and then the masses will be taught through successful armed action why and how this form of struggle has to be followed. But he does not say how "success" is

*This book was reviewed by Mohit Sen in *Mainstream* (February 10, 1968) and it was followed by a discussion note by Lajpat Rai in *Mainstream*, March 2, 1968.

guaranteed and what happens if there is a chain of failures. The lesson that Debray has learnt is in direct contradiction with Lenin's lessons that the form of struggle is one thing that we never teach the masses, but always learn from them. This Leninist lesson is discarded by Debray and this constitutes his starting point of departure from Marxism-Leninism.

Debray leaves no one in doubt as to the "vanguardist" character of his form of struggle, that is, what was once denounced by the leadership of the Communist Party of China as "Commandism". This vanguardist, utopian, schematic character of the Debray doctrine is clearly manifest in the following passage formulated by him:

"Differences between Vietnam and Latin America lead to the following contrast: whereas in Vietnam the military pyramid of the liberation forces is built from the base up, in Latin America on the other hand, it tends to be built from the apex down—the permanent forces first (the *foco*), then the semi-regular forces in the vicinity of the *foco*, and lastly or after victory (Cuba) the militia." Who has ever been able to produce such a simple—as simple as a simpleton can formulate—formula for the Revolution in the Latin American countries? This theory of revolution resembles the Biblical theory of light—"And God said: let there be light, And there was light."

Perhaps, Debray has crudely idealised what he has seen to have been followed by revolutionaries or, may be, by a group of adventurists in the Latin American countries from the subjective angle and one-sided appraisal of the history of Cuban revolution. As if "Fidel Castro said—Let there be Revolution. And there was revolution," afterward Debray got the light.

There is a book entitled, *Problems of Strategy in Guerilla War Against Japan*, written by Mao-Tse Tung in the year 1933. In this Mao-Tse Tung elaborated the concept: that armed Guerilla struggle needs a mass base from which to operate. But Debray

denounces even his admirers like Paul Sweezy for suggesting that some such strategy was followed in Cuba, by Fidel Castro. But the author of *Revolution Rediscovered* (**Revolution in the Revolution?**) is ruthless in his criticism of such concepts of strategy. He says: "That an intellectual, especially if he is a bourgeois, should speak of strategy before all else, is normal. Unfortunately however, the right road, the only feasible one, sets out from tactical data, rising gradually toward the definition of Strategy."

In other words, according to Debray, tactics is not determined by strategy; on the contrary strategy is determined by tactics. Those who speak of strategy, that is, mass base, class alliance etc. are supposed to "present to us in the form of principles and a rigid framework certain so-called strategic concepts which in reality are results of a series of experiments of a tactical nature."

If anyone imagines that Debray is contributing some concepts which are, right or wrong, specimens of new contributions to the science of revolution, he is sadly mistaken. The philosophy of blindfold armed action without reliance on a mass upsurge and class alliances against the main enemy, had been experimented in the past in our own country by the old revolutionaries generally known as Terrorists—particularly in Bengal and Punjab. Since 1935 terrorism as a political trend became defunct because its adherents understood the futility of armed action without the masses and mass base. Many old terrorists like the author of this article accepted

Marxism-Leninism through sharp conflict with almost exactly the same ideas as are advocated by Debray. More than three decades after the demise of Bengal terrorism, Debray is trying to revoke the ghost in Latin American countries and if possible in France too.

Debray replaces all forms of class struggle by armed guerilla struggle, deprecating at the same time, all preconditions such as political leadership, national front (or any front whatsoever)

and organisations. He complains that "once again and in spite of all previous experiences, (*institutions* are taking priority over *action*." He then continues, "Why? Because such people are not yet liberated from the old obsession; they believe that revolutionary awareness and organisations must and can in every case precede revolutionary action." No, that is an obsession, particularly of Marxists-Leninists. According to Debray "revolutionary awareness" (read consciousness) and "revolutionary organisation" is to follow "revolutionary action". Then who is to do the action first? The answer is—"It is necessary to proceed from the small to the large". And "the smallest is the guerilla foco." And how does the *foco* come into being? The question does not arise because it is already there and don't ask any question about its origin. Like Brahma, it is self-born or ever-born. But how does it expand? Through success and from success to success. A philosopher without any idea of history is like a child who has just learnt to speak.

Debray talks as if his "foco" falls from the heaven, expands in vacuum and multiplies like unicellular organisms but *without* precedent, without the masses and *without* historical environment. In simple language this is adventurism run riot. It is not for nothing that Lenin reminded, in his letter to American workers in the year 1918 that "Revolutions are not made to order". Debray, under the pretext of speaking on behalf of a historically concrete situation in Latin America, which of course he does not explain, seeks to drown Marxism-Leninism by reviving Blanquism transposed to the rural scene. But imitating Marx, we may say—if Blanquism was a tragedy, it reappears in Debrayism as a comedy.

Finally, we can apply Debray's characterisation of Trotskyism to Debrayism itself, as "metaphysics". Metaphysics constitute the common trait of Trotskyism and Debrayism, despite their differences on many points.

Revolutionary Character and Revolutionary Struggle

B. LEIBZON

THE words "revolutionary" and "revolutionary character" are no abstract concepts, but have a concrete meaning for each historical epoch. In each epoch they acquire a specific content depending on what class represents the basic revolutionary forces of the epoch and what tasks have to be attained on the road of the progressive development of mankind.

Examining the essence of revolutionary character in close connection with the content of the epoch it manifests itself in, Vladimir Lenin stressed that, though in each epoch there were individuals, partial movements now ahead, now back, various deviations from the average type and from the average rate of movement, though it was impossible to know in advance how the particular historical movements of the given epoch would develop, we could know and we knew *what class* was in the centre of one or another epoch, determining its main content, its main development trends, the chief specific features of the historical situation of the given epoch, etc.

The essence of the present epoch which began from the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia is in the transition from capitalism to socialism, and it is the international working class—the most consistent bearer of the socialist ideal—that is at the centre of this epoch.

The great revolutionary changes that have taken place in the world in the last half a century are connected with the struggle of the working class and its principal gain—the world socialist system. An interest for socialism has grown immeasurably among the non-proletarian strata of the population, too, and intellectuals and students have been joining the ranks of active opponents of imperialism. Lenin's prediction that, in the coming decisive battles of the world revolution, the movement of the majority of our planet's population, initially directed at national liberation, would turn against capitalism and imperialism, has come true. Today the successes of the world revolutionary process which paves the way to socialism depend to an ever greater extent on the activity and unity of action of the three basic revolutionary forces of our time—the socialist community, the working class of capita-

list countries, and the national-liberation movement.

However, the dialectics of history are such that the expansion of world revolutionary ranks by their being joined by new nations and new social strata, promoting immensely the forces that are struggling against imperialism, creates at the same time certain specific difficulties leading under certain conditions to manifestations of instability, right-wing opportunism and left-wing adventurism in some countries. As Lenin wrote, the revolutionary movement had witnessed more than once that one and the same class feature, for instance that of the petty-bourgeoisie, manifested itself both in the depression of an opportunist and in the despair of a terrorist.

This is conspicuously obvious today in the various evaluations of the historical role of the working class. Right-wing opportunists of all shades, echoing the bourgeois sociologists, claim that the middle-class strata are growing in our time, while the strength of the working class, despite what Marx used to say a hundred years ago, is diminishing and that the "working class is becoming more and more integrated in bourgeois society." Opportunists ignore the fact that these hundred years saw the growth of the international working class from nine millions to 540 millions, that is by 60 times, while the population of our planet has increased from 1,181 million to 3,400 million people. They depict the working-class movement of the past and present as a process of the simple inclusion of the lower social strata into the existing political and social strata conditions. Hereby they "substantiate" class collaboration instead of class struggle.

Extremist forces roused by the struggle of the proletariat often reproach, in their turn, the working class of our time of being "unrevolutionary," contrasting it against the activity of intellectual and petty-bourgeois adventurist groups or declaring that not the international working class and the world system of socialism, but the national liberation movement in Asia, Africa and Latin America is in the centre of the present epoch. When examined closer, all these "accusations" against the working class, brought under the guise of "Left" phrases, prove to be founded on the argument that the working class in developed capitalist countries today does not resort to the sharp forms of struggle that are characteristic for the countries that struggle for their political and economic independence. The

This constitutes two sections out of four of an article published in the Soviet theoretical journal, Kommunist (No 8, 1968) under the caption, "Leninist Criteria of Revolutionary Character and Forms of Revolutionary Struggle."

following is advanced as the chief criterion of revolutionary character: those who come out for the sharpest form of struggle are the most "revolutionary" of all, regardless of the conditions they have to act and struggle in.

However, imperialist propaganda is in no way worried by the ultra-revolutionary phraseology of those who accuse the working class of having "lost its revolutionary potential." On the contrary, it supports the "Leftists" with no less readiness than the Right-wing revisionists, because everything that can weaken the working class and its alliance with other revolutionary forces plays objectively into the hands of imperialism.

Communist Parties' role

The revolutionary character of the working class finds its loftiest expression in the activities of its Marxist-Leninist Parties. Communists are the most numerous and best organized revolutionary detachment of our time, united by a scientific ideology and firm, conscious discipline. At the same time, the Communist Parties are resolutely coming out against sectarianism which tries to isolate the working class and its party from other progressive forces.

The revolutionary character, of Communist Parties manifests itself not only in their own activity, but also in their ability to rally all the forces that oppose imperialism and monopoly capital and to draw into struggle ever broader masses of the people because, according to Vladimir Lenin, the revolutionary energy of the masses is the only real force that can make changes come true.

Marxism-Leninism sees genuine revolutionary character in the fullest possible and consistent utilization of the possibilities already created by historical development for the establishment of the new progressive social system. And Lenin appraised the forms of struggle not from an abstract stand, but from the viewpoint of how they were in conformity with the development of society, how they promoted the expansion of the movement of the masses and its rise to a higher level. Lenin stressed that the perverted and senseless tactics of anarchism which "made" revolutions were profoundly alien to the Bolsheviks.

The most revolutionary slogan which seems to call for the most resolute methods of struggle is bound to turn into a hollow sound if it is proclaimed regardless of the specific features of the given period and of the really existing forms of the movement, when those who have advanced it do not wish, as Lenin wrote, to reckon with the actual situation and with the conditions of the given mass movement for the sake of a wrongly understood slogan in its rigid sense: such an application of a slogan degenerates invariably into revolutionary phrase-mongering.

Life has proved that there cannot be any general forms of struggle, suitable to any situation. The true revolutionary character manifests itself always in the community of progressive aims and revolutionary forms of struggle, in harmony with the most successful attainment of these aims. This means that it is extremely important to master all the

forms of revolutionary struggle—both peaceful and non-peaceful, both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary—and to be ready for the quickest and most unexpected change of one form of struggle by another. With all the unexpectedness which a revolutionary situation may acquire, in addition to certain objective prerequisites, its turning into a revolution calls for subjective prerequisites too, namely the ability and preparedness of the progressive class for rising to overthrow the ruling class and to lead the masses to struggle. It is quite obvious that these qualities are prepared and moulded to a decisive degree by the working-class party founded on revolutionary Marxist ideology.

Speaking of the criteria of proletarian revolutionary character Vladimir Lenin stressed that only that person could be qualified as a Marxist who strive for the recognition of the struggle of classes prior to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

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THE Communist Parties of a number of countries in Latin America, of Portugal and of some other countries are known to have arrived at the conclusion that the armed overthrow of the ruling oligarchiel is the main way of liberation struggle in these countries. This means the recognition of the fact that, in conditions of military dictatorships and the complete suppression of democratic liberties and with American imperialism playing the part of world policeman, no national liberation and social changes can be attained without a victorious armed struggle.

The historical experience of armed struggle, generalized and summed up by Marxism-Leninism, shows that no matter what forms this struggle might acquire, its success depends to a decisive extent on how firmly it is supported by the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses and how thoroughly it has been prepared.

Drawing on the lessons of history, Marxism-Leninism regards armed forms of struggle not as an isolated fact, but in close connection with the given concrete situation and with the state of the mass movement. This approach to armed forms of struggle differs fundamentally from the approach to them on the part of all sorts of adventurist elements who proclaim themselves "Left Marxists" and who boast of their radicalism.

In Latin America, for instance, some Leftist elements are popularizing the ideal of a revolutionary who in all cases considers partial demands to be illusive and ineffective. He won't waste his time on pre-election propaganda, on pasting posters or meeting the spokesmen of other political parties, but will devote himself entirely to nothing but organizing direct armed actions. And though the propagandists of such a "revolutionary character" sometimes pretend to pay homage to Marxism by speaking of the role of the masses, their haughty disdain of any other forms of struggle but armed struggle is proof enough of their reluctance to conduct any sort of work among the masses and to look for ways and means for enhancing their activity.

Meanwhile, even the acknowledgement of armed struggle as the main form in certain conditions does not mean at all that everyday and routine work—developing the self-consciousness of the masses—may be ignored. Lenin wrote that it was always necessary to intensify and extend work among, and influence upon the masses; without this work all political activity would degenerate into a game. He stressed that revolutionary Marxists would never give up their everyday work among the masses, for they considered it to be real preparation for the decisive battle.

It is but natural that Communist Parties are resolute opponents of any standardization of tactics and are coming out against those who brand as pseudo-revolutionary every person who recognizes, in addition to armed struggle, other forms of it, as well.

All Forms

The Communist Parties of Venezuela, Mexico, Bolivia, Peru and some others, as we have said above, consider armed struggle to be the most likely for the victory of a revolution in their countries. However, they underline their loyalty to the principle that the working class must be able to employ in the revolutionary movement all forms of struggle without exception. They consider the thesis that the limited demands of workers, office employees, farmers and students are of no importance and that the advancement of historical targets is the only thing that matters to be quite erroneous. These Parties stress that their stand is directly opposite to the adventurist position of those who are irresponsibly calling to armed struggle when there are no suitable conditions for it, for in this case this struggle is doomed in advance to failure and leads to nothing but the loss of revolutionary forces, to the demoralization of some strata, and to the scattering of energy. The Communist Party of Colombia has done a great deal to develop an armed struggle in the countryside and has scored major successes in organising the self-defence of the masses. At the same time, the Party does not agree with the claims that participation in election struggle in Latin American countries is nothing but a tragic-comedy from which revolutionaries should keep aloof. Colombian Communists do not exclude at all—either theoretically or practically—the necessity of taking advantage of opportunities.

It is not bare revolutionary slogans, but everyday struggle in all its manifestations that imbues the masses with the consciousness of their strength. Such struggle is not a fruitless waste of energy and not an illusion entertained by men and women of feeble determination, as the Leftist extremists noisily qualify it, but an essential road to victory, including the road of armed struggle, too.

The present "Left Marxists" readily refer to Vladimir Lenin and the Bolsheviks as the acknowledged model of revolutionary character, persuading themselves and others that they are their followers. However, they do not take pains to analyse the reason why Lenin and the Bolsheviks had rejected both the Right-wing opportunists' way of trailing

in the tail of events and the Left-wingers' revolutionary adventurism.

The Communists of developed capitalist countries show a concrete historical approach to the forms of revolutionary struggle, too.

The development of state-monopoly capitalism in the conditions of the changed alignment of the forces of capitalism and of socialism on the international arena in favour of socialism has opened up new possibilities for the struggle of the working class and, in particular, has extended the chances of taking advantage of the struggle for reforms to promote revolutionary aims. The working class of many countries under these new conditions is capable of forcing upon the bourgeoisie—even before the overthrow of capitalism—the carrying out of measures which, overstepping the bounds of ordinary reforms, are of vital importance both to the working class, to its further struggle for the victory of the revolution and for socialism, and to the majority of the nation.

The international Communist movement originated in uncompromising struggle against reformism—the ideology and practice of opportunism which substitutes the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism by the narrow practicism of "improving" capitalist reality. However, opposing reformism, Leninism is not at all indifferent to reforms. Discussing the draft Resolution of the Fourth Congress of the Comintern on the Programme of the Communist International, Lenin made the special proposal for including the clause that the Comintern condemned equally vigorously both the attempts of labeling as "opportunism" the inclusion of partial demands into the Programme as well as those at obstructing and substituting the principle revolutionary target by partial demands.

Reforms and Revolution

Communists do not regard the struggle for reforms as a manifestation of opportunism at all; they see opportunism in the setting of reforms off against revolutionary targets and against the struggle for socialist aims, in giving up these aims for the sake of partial demands. Moreover, Communists have always considered the connection between struggle for reforms and struggle for the revolution are being that each partial concession gained has been ultimately, the result of revolutionary struggle and could become a step towards raising the movement to a new level.

All the concessions the working class of capitalist countries have wrested from the ruling classes are the direct outcome of its revolutionary struggle in its own respective countries and of the successes of the revolutionary struggle in other countries. The revolutionary upsurge, which swept almost the whole world immediately after the October Revolution in Russia, though it did not overthrow capitalism, proved to be strong enough to give working people the chance of taking advantage of the results of the struggle over many years. The victory of the Great October Revolution and its consequences gave and gives the working class of capitalist countries the chance of improving its own position. The reformists

who ascribe to themselves the credit for all the reforms carried out in the capitalist world are but reapers of other people's harvest. And the development of the capitalist society after World War II confirms by numerous examples Lenin's statement to the effect that reforms were a by-product of revolutionary struggle.

Meanwhile, the developments taking place in the present world bring out increasingly the new relationship between reform and revolutionary struggle. The essence of that relationship is that the struggle for reforms, *per se*, if it is of a really militant and mass nature, brings the socialist revolution nearer.

Lenin's fundamental conclusions on the bonds between the struggle for democracy and that for socialism, that is, between democratic reforms within the framework of capitalism and the complete rout of capitalism, have a direct bearing upon the problem of the relationship of reform to revolution. Exposing the falsity and narrowness of bourgeois democracy Lenin, at the same time, used to say that it would be entirely wrong to think that the struggle for democracy was capable of diverting the proletariat from the socialist revolution or of pushing it into the background. On the contrary, in our time when imperialism is striving more and more to narrow down democracy, to reduce it to naught, the struggle for democracy cannot but turn into a struggle against imperialism, paving the way to transformations of a socialist nature.

Lenin's Stand

Lenin's criticism of the Leftist rejection of slogans or national self-determination during World War I; his April 1917 Theses; his work *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It* written in September 1917; and many of his other statements elucidate scientifically the problem of the relationship of struggle for reforms and democracy with the advancement towards socialism. It took, however, a great deal of time for this theoretically established regularity to manifest itself fully with the development of state-monopoly capitalism to be comprehended by the Communist movement and to determine its direct actions.

The changes that have taken place in the world gave the Communist Parties of developed capitalist countries the chance—without altering their attitude to reformism, as a policy which is well within the framework of capitalism—of showing a new approach to reforms and of regarding the struggle for a certain type of reforms as a weapon of vital importance to the victory of the revolution.

In Italy, France and other capitalist countries, Communists consider it their task to struggle for the reforms which restrict the rule of monopolies and promote the possibility of democratic forces influencing the state's policy both in international and in home affairs. The struggle for extending democracy, for participation in production management and for democratic control of capital investments, the struggle for solving the employment and many other problems is now impossible without encroaching upon the domination of monopolies.

However, in the struggle for solving urgent prob-

lems, Communists do not content themselves with activities within the framework of bourgeois democratic institutions alone. Soberly appraising the possibilities offered by bourgeois democracy Communists expose its limited and deceitful nature. In the West, there are conceptions that the democracy formed there is an age-old tradition of European nations, almost their national feature. This sort of views which have nothing in common with reality sometimes do penetrate into Communist circles, too. Actually, the level of democracy reflects the real alignment of class forces. The fascist coup in Greece, the unsuccessful military conspiracy which was to put an end to democracy in Italy and the tendency of reactionary forces to limit in every possible way the role of parliaments and municipal self-government in other countries show that, under certain conditions, bourgeois democracy may give rise to the most reactionary regimes.

The struggle for democracy in the interests of the struggle for socialism also presupposes the Communist Party's extensive work among the masses, the constant enhancement of their vigilance, their capacity of intervening for the solution of vital problems in the life of the nation and of influencing the development of events through mass actions or activities of working class organisations.

The grand scope of mass struggle in France points to the mighty revolutionary forces dormant in the working class. Having begun from supporting the students who demanded a democratic reform of the higher school, the movement of working people quickly spread beyond the initial aims and actually shook the entire country. The great force of mass action paves the way to new successes of the working class and of the democratic movement in the struggle against the domination and rule of monopolies.

Our epoch is fraught with changes that may require a rapid change of tactics and the resorting to forms that seemed out of place but yesterday. This is borne out not only by the events in France, but also by the nature which the struggle against the war in Vietnam and for the civil rights of Negroes is acquiring in the USA, by the mass struggle of trade unions and students against emergency laws in the FRG, and the mass actions of workers in Japan.

Right Opportunism

Among the manifestation of the Right-wing opportunist tendencies that show themselves in some Communist Parties is the allegation that the entire great variety of revolutionary struggle comes only to election campaigns and parliamentary activity. So we see the "Right-wingers" and the "Left-wingers" to have the common feature that they deprive political struggle of its possibilities, limiting it to but the one given form. Calling unconditionally for a historical approach to revolutionary means, Marxism, as Lenin pointed out, is distinguished from all primitive forms of socialism for not binding the movement to any single definite form of struggle. Lenin stressed that Marxists did not invent any forms of struggle and never turned any of them into the absolute, but were constantly in quest of new

forms, developing those that had been created by the masses. The revolutionary character of a party is tested to a great measure by its capacity of quickly drawing conclusions from changing reality and of mastering all the forms of struggle prompted by the situation.

Lenin once showed what was hidden behind the formula advanced by "economists"—"it is the struggle which is possible that is desirable, and it is the struggle waged at the given instant that is possible." Lenin considered this formula as expressing the tendency of boundless opportunism and worship of spontaneity. The revolutionary character of a party lies not in adapting it to the spontaneous forms of struggle and not in thrusting upon reality one or another form which might have justified itself in some other country, but in correctly appraising the revolutionary possibilities inherent in a given situation, taking full advantage of these possibilities in the interests of the struggle for progress towards the ultimate aim, and leading the masses towards carrying out revolutionary changes.

It is well known that not only the revolutionary classes learn by their own experience, but that the ruling classes, too, learn lessons from their defeats. So, no wonder that the forms of revolutionary struggle which are unexpected to the reactionary forces that prove to be, as a rule, the most successful. Meanwhile, changing conditions may lead to a form of struggle, that seemed to be a thing of the past already, proving itself to become potent once more in a new situation.

Studying the experience of the revolutionary battles of 1905 Vladimir Lenin arrived at the conclusion that the likely form of the forthcoming strug-

gle was determined in part by its content and in part by the earlier forms of the people's revolutionary struggle and the counter-revolutionary struggle of Czarist autocracy. This conclusion which referred to the best prospects of revolutionary struggle in Russia at that time is of a general methodological significance, showing the close interdependence of the content of the struggle, the previous revolutionary experience, and the forms of counter-revolutionary resistance. Hence, forms of struggle cannot be invented in an office. They are born in revolutionary practice proper and may acquire a most unexpected character.

No one had ever invented the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, but precisely they were destined to become the organs of the armed uprising and embryos of workers' power in Russia. No one invented the concrete forms of the Popular Front in France, but it was these forms that played an outstanding role in the anti-fascist struggle, and after the wiping out of Hitlerism, the Popular Front in its various forms served in many countries as the foundation of the new, people's democratic government. The workers' commissions that originated in recent years in Spain on the basis of the experience accumulated by the people have turned into a potent means of undermining the Francoist regime.

Revolutionary character presupposes the skill of timely identifying the embryos of the new revolutionary possibilities that originate in practice and the relevant forms of revolutionary activity, to fill them with a new content, to develop and supplement them with a view to passing over to ever higher and more active forms of struggle.

Turning Point in Southern Africa's Liberation Struggle

RAMESH JAURA

"THE African revolution has rolled down to South Africa's doorstep. It cannot be too long before the flames of freedom seep into consume the evil forces that have plagued our country for centuries." This was stated by Deputy President of the African National Congress O.R. Tambo in the June 1967 issue of *Sechaba*.

On June 28 last year, a leaflet was distributed throughout South Africa. It read: "Mobilise and prepare, South African freedom

is coming like the rising sun. It will be won in our lifetime! Amandla Ngawethu Maatla Ke A Rona! Power to the People". That was the time when fighting had intensified in South-West Africa, Angola and Mozambique. Fortnight later, combined forces of the ANC and Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) launched an offensive after the two liberation movements had formed an alliance.

The united offensive started with intensive warfare in the

Zambesi, River Valley, Northern Matabeleland, the Wankie Game Reserve and the entire area between the Victoria Falls and Kariba Dam. During the clashes in Wankie, as many as 196 troops of the illegal regime of Ian Smith an racist South Africa were reported to be dead. Rhodesia's "Justice" Minister Lardner-Burke admitted that there had been no respite since the fighting started.

On March 18 last, the London *Daily Mirror* reported: "The 'invasion' took Rhodesia

completely by surprise". Giving details of the offensive, Rata Botswere wrote in *Mayibuye*, organ of the ANC official in Zambia: "The offensive was planned to begin in March as the rainy season began to close. The action of the enemy in executing freedom fighters was not part of the planning. But the storm which broke following this evil deed, the indignation of the masses, and the international isolation of the Ian Smith regime, made this an opportune moment to attack".

Stanley Uys wrote in the Johannesburg *Sunday Times*, on March 24 last: "The new terrorist (sic) invasion of Rhodesia—third wave since last August—throws into sharp focus the extent of the terrorist drive through Southern Africa, and even the greater need for vigilance and preparedness by South Africa... The guerrilla campaign has also caused Rhodesia to enlist further help from South Africa, and South African police units are fighting side-by-side with Rhodesian security forces."

Ever since the African guerrillas launched an offensive to wrest freedom from the White minority regimes in Rhodesia and South Africa, there has been a concerted bid by certain sections of the White community, in countries which constitute the NATO to play down the achievements of the freedom fighters. The latest and considerably significant attempt in this direction was made by the *Times News Team* which (conducted a) survey of the liberation movements in Southern Africa. In the first of series entitled "Black Man in Search of Power"—and reproduced in the *Statesman* last March and April—the *Times News Team* characterised the guerrillas as "weak willed, undisciplined, tactfully naive and burdened with a technology they do not understand" (a). It, however, added that "not all freedom fighters have been incompetent" (b). In the second series in the reportage, the *Team* did not fight shy of admitting that "Angola and Mozambique liberation movements are certainly more businesslike affairs than Rhodesia's".

The remark (a) in the first series was based on some isolated instances of "hapless revolutionaries" straggling into bars on the Rhodesian border villages and being caught by the Smith regime's police. The remark (b) was prompted by "the wave of shock troops which paddled across the Zambesi river last August" and was made of "sterner stuff".

Again, the impression (a) was substantiated by the references to Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda's reported remark that he had been "disappointed" with the freedom fighters. However, on the basis of what President Kaunda told the *Newsteam*, it is difficult to perceive his disappointment. His remark that the movements had "not succeeded in bringing about sufficient disorder" in Rhodesia does not justify the *Team's* interpretation. And, his statement that "they should be creating far more problems for the Smith regime than they are doing" only indicates his desire that the freedom fighters should liberate Rhodesia and South Africa sooner than later.

Methods for Recruitment

Among the ways ZAPU is stated to adopt for recruiting freedom fighters, is the "traditional method" of press-ganging. Another measure is asking the African women to deny their husbands the conjugal rights the success of which, according to the *Team*, is "unknown". Whatever the success of the measure, there is no reason to consider it as unjustified or to attempt to hint that the freedom fighters do not have support of the African populace in the White minority-ruled Rhodesia and South Africa. Nor can one make a comparison between the "business like" guerrilla in Angola and Mozambique and the "hapless revolutionaries" of the ANC-ZAPU alliance. This is because while the former started guerrilla fighting seven to eight years before such a step was necessitated for the latter due to the repressive measures adopted by the South African and Rhodesian regimes.

However, the ANC's decision to resort to armed fight with the large and modernised forces of the two regimes was arrived at after it became clear that freedom would not come to the African populace on a platter. Through a number of strike actions and mass movements the ANC had mobilised the people of African and Indian community as well as some conscience-stricken sections of the White community.

Now that the armed struggle has been launched with active and moral support from Tanzania, Algeria, UAR and several other Afro-Asian countries, the success of the freedom struggle is hinged on to the objective situation obtaining in the two countries, and the impact of Ian Smith-Vorster alliance on the international opinion. In a discussion article on the prospects for armed struggle in South Africa in the May (1968) issue of *Sechaba*, Joe Slovo wrote: "It is reasonable to infer that if the Smith Group could have avoided calling in South African troops to cope with the first batch of guerrillas it would have preferred to do so. As it is, it lays itself open to the charge that its capacity to muster sufficient internal support to the deal with this type of situation is suspect."

In the discussion article, first submitted to the National student Conference held in Oxford in March last, Joe Slovo stated that it was not inconceivable that, in the long run, this micro-community of 200,000 Whites could muster either sufficient resources or morale to cope with a growing guerrilla movement which would in varying degrees gain the allegiance of the politically deprived four million Africans.

Pointing out the differences and similarities between the ANC-ZAPU struggle and the freedom fighting in the Portuguese held parts of Southern Africa, Joe Slovo stated: "The inherent weakness of the Smith group and the Portuguese and their vulnerability to organised military insurrection is patent". But to say the same of South Africa, he felt, was "being too sanguine". South Africa not

only had considerable resources and weapons of the White controlled South African state, but also the support of countries like France, West Germany and Britain.

But asking whether there were sanctuary-providing and logistically important friendly borders, he thought, was overdoing the historical analogy. "There is in fact no classical type model of physical conditions to which successful guerrilla struggle conforms", he added. Different geographical factors called for different methods and forms of guerrilla struggle. The only universal prerequisites were to be sought in the general political

situation rather than in physical or geographic factors.

Given a colonial-type situation, he stated, armed struggle becomes feasible if and only if, there is disillusionment on the part of majority of the people with the prospect of achieving liberation by traditional and non-violent processes. Secondly, a readiness on the part of the people to respond in varying degrees and ways to the call for armed confrontation—from actually joining the guerrillas, to making their path easy and that of the enemy hard. Thirdly, the existence of a political leadership capable not only of gaining the organised allegiance of the

people for armed struggle but having also the ability to carry out the painstaking process of planning, preparation and overall direction of the conduct of operation.

It can be said without exaggeration that these pre-requisites have been created by the leadership of the ANC and ZAPU through years of hard work under perilous conditions and with unabated zeal. Today history is witnessing a decisive turning point in the struggle for national liberation in South Africa and Rhodesia, and the day may not be far off when the White-minority regimes are overthrown, yielding place to the African majority.

BIHAR SCENE

New Stirrings in Adivasi Politics

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ADIVASI politics in Bihar has taken a sudden turn. Recent militant demonstrations in different parts of Chotanagpur area, the main tribal belt of the State is an indication of the brewing discontent among the Adivasis. While the agitation has been spreading in all parts of the tribal belts in the State, Ranchi District and some parts of Singhbhum District have become the main centre of unrest. A series of meeting and demonstrations were held in different parts of Ranchi and Singhbhum districts. But more militant demonstrations were held at Gumla, Khunti and Ranchi town. Some of the demonstrations were massive and the adivasis came with their arrows and bows.

Demand for a separate Adivasi State, Jharkhand, has been the main slogan of these demonstrations. This demand has a magnetic influence on the Adivasis. They have been made to

understand that Jharkhand State is the only panacea for their all sufferings.

The desperate mood of the Adivasis is reflected in some of the slogans raised by the demonstrators: *Concede Our Demands or Face the Arrows*, 'Chotanagpur Hamara Hai', 'Jharkhand Larke Lenge—Teer Ke bal par'. (We shall fight and get Jharkhand with the might of the arrow). Speeches at the mass rallies were more fiery—"We don't ask anybody to grant Jharkhand as Jaipal Singh or S. K. Bage or other leaders did in the past. The begging bowl has been thrown away. We shall achieve it by our strength."

The accumulated discontent among Adivasis has provided an opportunity to the young and militant section of the tribal people to take up their cause and convince them that the remedy for their sufferings lies in a separate State.

It is a fact that the Adivasi

problems have been completely neglected during the past twenty years. Their main problems are: (1) appropriation of their land; (2) exploitation by moneylenders (mahajans); (3) destruction of tribal social system; (4) growing unemployment especially among the educated Adivasi youths; and (5) lack of irrigational facilities for agricultural work.

Despite special protection provided in the Santhal Pargana and Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, large tracts of land belonging to the Adivasis have been grabbed by mahajans (moneylenders) and other non-Adivasis. Adivasis are still forced to cultivate those lands but crops are harvested by mahajans. They are unable to free themselves from the clutches of mahajans due to the heavy interest charged by the latter for the money he has lent. The crude exploitation by the moneylenders has led the Adivasis to hate the non-Adivasis in the

area. They are called as "Dakus" (exploiters).

Chotanagpur is the main industrial centre of Bihar. All important industrial complexes—Jamshedpur, Ranchi, Bokaro, etc., and all mining centres are situated in this region. But the entire industry and mines as well as the trade are controlled by the non-Adivasis. Expansion of the industries has led to further expropriation of the cultivable land. Despite this industrial growth, the Adivasis are not getting enough employment. Educated Adivasi youths are naturally aggrieved by the denial of employment facilities in the industrial concerns.

Similarly young Adivasis are dissatisfied with the neglect of Adivasi students in the Ranchi University, which command the entire Chotanagpur area. Their main grievances are that Adivasi students were not getting enough facilities for admission in the colleges while non-Adivasis are being given preference. This has resulted in a separate Adivasi students' movement led by the Adivasi Chhatra Parishad.

Crack up of Jharkhand Party

The former Jharkhand Party led by Sri Jaipal Singh MP had the monopoly of the leadership of the Adivasi movement in Chotanagpur and Santhalpargana districts. With the merger of Jharkhand Party in the Congress in 1963 a vacuum had been created in the area.

Sri Jaipal Singh had at that time promised to "fight for Jharkhand from within the Congress". But he was made ineffective in the Congress due to group intrigues. Thus he failed to be of any service to his people from within the Congress.

Sri K. B. Sahay succeeded in splitting the Jharkhand rank and file by winning Sri S. K. Bage, the second in leadership of the Jharkhand Party, to his side. He was made a Minister in charge of Tribal Welfare. But none of the problems of Adivasis were solved. Consequently discontent among Adivasis continued to mount, and a feeling gained ground among the Adivasis that not only the Congress Government but their

own leaders had betrayed them.

The Jharkhand Party workers and its middle leadership who had opposed the merger with the Congress also failed to provide a unified leadership. Three or four splinter groups emerged in the districts claiming to be the Jharkhand Party; in fact four Jharkhand parties appeared. These groups were not capable of creating confidence among Adivasis.

Enter of Jana Sangh

The vacuum was utilised by the Jana Sangh to expand its influence in the Adivasi areas. It is an admitted fact that the Jana Sangh made organised and consistent efforts more than any other political party. Hence it could expand its influence in many areas.

Jana Sangh was able to penetrate in many parts of Ranchi and Singhbhum Districts. The ground for the Jana Sangh penetration was prepared by the communal riots of Jamshedpur in 1964, which spread into the interior of Singhbhum and Ranchi Districts. It was followed by an intensive and extensive campaign by the Jana Sangh; the campaign was organised and conducted by the central leaders of the Jana Sangh. Sri Nanajee Deshmukh was in charge of the campaign, because the Bihar unit of the Jana Sangh did not have the capacity nor the resources for such a gigantic task.

Jana Sangh was helped in this campaign by the Arya Samaj which launched the "Suddhikaran" (reconversion) movement. More than 3,000 Christians have been reconverted to Hinduism by the Arya Samajis.

While the Jana Sangh tried to expand its influence in all tribal areas it mainly concentrated on non-Christian Adivasis. The extent of the Jana Sangh penetration and its influence among the Adivasis can be gauged from the success it achieved in the last General Election. It could secure six Assembly seats in Ranchi and Singhbhum. Communal riots of Ranchi in 1967 provided further ground for the Jana Sangh's expansion.

Despite the expansion in its influence and organisation, the Jana Sangh could not give a

lead to the Adivasis for the struggle for the redressal of their main grievances, such as the restoration of land grabbed by mahajans and others, exploitation by moneylenders and securing employment. Because the Jana Sangh has been able to expand its influence with the help of mahajans, traders, contractors and non-Adivasi (Hindu) population in the area, who could carry a considerable section of Adivasis with them, in the vacuum created by the disintegration of the Jharkhand Party.

CPI's Influence

The CPI has been able to make headway in Santhalpargana District; the Communists have pockets of influence in Singhbhum District also. It has been able to organise and lead the Adivasi struggles against Mahajans' exploitation. Though the CPI could get only two Assembly seats in the last General Election it was able to give a new orientation to the Adivasi movement in the State.

An agitation was launched during the last harvesting season to save the crops of Adivasis from the clutches of Mahajans. Despite the police connivance with the landlords the Adivasis were able to harvest their crop under CPI leadership. This has created confidence among Adivasi peasants that they would be able to protect their rights by their own organisation and struggle.

Though CPM is not a big force in the tribal region, it has been trying to spread of influence in Ranchi and Singhbhum districts. They are trying to utilise the growing discontent among the Adivasis, but their influence is exaggerated in some quarters to provide an excuse for taking drastic action.

Despite the merger of the Jharkhand Party in the Congress, the Adivasis have no faith in the Congress Party. They consider the Congress rule as being mainly responsible for their present miseries. During the 20-year rule, the Congress had not made any serious effort to improve the lot of Adivasis.

Various tribal welfare measu-

res have only helped some Congress supporters to amass wealth. A few non-Adivasi Congressman, who were entrusted with the task of welfare operation had grabbed the major portion of amounts spent by the government under the Congress as welfare schemes.

Adivasis are sore over the protection provided to their exploiters, Mahajans, traders and contractors—by the Congress Government. A recent study has proved that Community Development projects in the Adivasi areas have proved to be a total failure.

All these combined together have resulted in the creation of a deep-rooted distrust against the Congress among the Adivasis.

Emergence of New Leadership

Apart from the three Jharkhand groups, a number of small organisations have emerged in the changed situation competing for providing leadership to the tribal unrest.

While each group has its own programme and has some vital differences with the other groups, all are in agreement on one issue—the demand for a separate State of the Adivasis, the Jharkhand State.

The new organisations are: (1) Birsa Sevalal, (2) Veer Birsa Dal, (3) Kranti Kari Morcha, (4) Chotanagpur Plateau Praja Panshad, (5) Adivasi Mahasabha, and (6) Adivasi Chatra Parishad. Roman Catholic Church and GEL Church have also become very active in the agitation. Among these organisations Birsa Seva Dal seem to be more active and popular in Ranchi District.

Church commands a powerful influence on the Christian Adivasis. Taking advantage of the discontent among the Adivasis on their genuine grievances the Church has been encouraging the demand for a separate State of Adivasis. A recent meeting of Church leaders is understood to have decided to extend full support to the agitation for Jharkhand State. The Christian missionaries support for a separate Jharkhand State is confirmed by Government sources as well.

CIA agents are believed to be active in the region. According to various sources, the CIA

money is flowing into this region to finance the agitation for a separate State.

Role of Congressmen

A section of Congressmen belonging to the K. B. Sahay group has come to the forefront to campaign for the cause of the Jharkhand State. By supporting the demand for a Jharkhand State they hope to rehabilitate their position in the region.

Sri Sahay's views were reflected in a recent statement of the Adivasi Congress leader Sri S. K. Bage (a Minister in the Sahay Ministry) a close associate of Sahay. Sri Bage has called upon Adivasis to raise their voice for a separate State of Jharkhand. Sri Bage lost his popularity among the Adivasis after merging in the Congress. He was defeated and lost his security deposit in the last General Election. Again he was defeated at the biennial election for the Legislative Council from graduates' constituency of Ranchi. His support for a separate Jharkhand State is regarded as a bid to rehabilitate his political position among the Adivasis.

Two district Congress Committees of Ranchi and Singhbhum, which are dominated by Sri K. B. Sahay's men have adopted resolutions demanding a separate Jharkhand State. In fact, the supporters of Sri K. B. Sahay have recently initiated a move for a separate Provincial Congress Committee for Chotanagpur area. Sri S. K. Bage, Sri Amanat Ali and Dr Akhouri, all supporters of Sri Sahay are in the forefront of this agitation inside the Congress. This is considered to be a move to create an impression among the Adivasis that the Chotanagpur Congress is free from the domination of non-Adivasis and it would be able to champion the cause of the Adivasis without any outside interference. This may be regarded as a prelude to intensify their campaign for a separate Jharkhand State.

Sri Jaipal Singh MP, who had been the undisputed leader of the Adivasis, is now feeling isolated from the main current of developments in Chotanagpur area.

He is perplexed by the emergence of new organisations and young leadership who do not care for his guidance. The movement of Adivasis against the existing socio-economic conditions, has developed beyond his comprehension.

In the Congress Sri Jaipal Singh has been made ineffective. Inside the Bihar Congress, his main supporters belonged to the group led by Sri Benodananda Jha. This group has already left the Congress and have formed the Loktantrik Congress Dal.

Having realised his isolation from the people as well as from the Congress organisations, Sri Jaipal Singh is seriously considering his course of action to restore his hold on Adivasi movement.

Sri Jaipal Singh's rethinking is reflected in a recent speech at a public meeting at Ranchi; he called upon Adivasis "to get ready for any sacrifice to achieve the goal of Jharkhand". He continued: "The demand for a separate Jharkhand State was to end the era of exploitation of the tribal community and for the protection of our culture and traditions. No sacrifice would be too big for it." According to sources close to Sri Jaipal Singh, the Jharkhand leader is believed to have almost made up his mind to quit the Congress and revive the Jharkhand Party in order to take up the leadership of the mounting tribal unrest.

Chiri Firing

Demonstration of an Adivasi mob on June 2 at Chiri against the illegal occupation of a plot belonging to an Adivasi by a Mahajan and police firing on the demonstration resulting in the death of six persons are some indications of the rising tempo of tribal unrest. The Mahajan was occupying the plot even after the judgement of the court in favour of the Adivasi. Local officers refused to help him to restore his right. Though this was nothing new in the tribal areas, where police and magistracy generally sided with the Mahajans, the new awakening led the Adivasis to come to the help of their fellow tribal in distress. Police rushed to the rescue of the Mahajan

which ultimately resulted in the firing and six deaths.

This incident created a chain reaction in the tribal area. Concern of all political circles over the deterioration of the situation in tribal areas is reflected from over a dozen adjournment motions moved in the Bihar legislature on the Chiri firing.

The United Front Government which realised the seriousness of the situation ordered a judicial enquiry into the Chiri firing. This prompt action on the part of the Government put a check on widespread agitation in the tribal areas on the issue.

Apart from a demand for a separate Jharkhand State the common demands of all Adivasi organisations are: (a) end of the exploitation of Adivasis by Mahajans and traders, (b) restoration of land grabbed by Mahajan and others, (c) employment of Adivasis in public and private sector industries, (d) end of official atrocities, (e) reservation of seats for Adivasis students in all colleges of Ranchi University, (f) appointment of Adivasis as Vice-Chancellor, Treasurer and Registrar of Ranchi University, and (g) declaration of Birsa Divas on June 3 as public holiday.

A Congress MLA who recent-

ly visited the areas said that "one cannot shut eyes from the growing frustration among the young Adivasis, boys and girls, culminating into a gigantic movement." Forty Legislators belonging to different political parties in the tribal area submitted a memorandum to the Government urging immediate steps to solve the "special problems of the region, which have been neglected by all Governments in utter disregard of Constitutional provisions and recommendations of various Commissions."

The danger signal can hardly be missed in the land of the Adivasis.

Where Mushawrat Can Work

NAFIS AHMAD

FOR full two decades since the partition, the Indian Muslims were practically left uncared for except on the occasions when someone attacked their lives and properties. No attempt was made either on the part of their own intelligentsia or by the Government to deliver them from their growing sense of frustration. And then in 1967, all of a sudden the name of Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawrat appeared. Its decision to take an active part in politics and to support in the General Election all those parties and individual candidates who would pledge to work and fight for the cause of these sixty million neglected people, echoed in many ways the sentiments of the community as a whole.

In the initial stages the Mushawrat received almost en-masse support of the Muslims and in no time the network of its branches spread from one corner of the country to the other. In fact, the failure of the Congress to keep up its high standards of secularism and the Hitlerite

designs of RSS and its political wing, the Jana Sangh, helped Mushawrat to get their hold over Muslim masses.

But like everything unreal the castle of Mushawrat soon collapsed like a pack of cards. In the last General Election it could not at all influence Muslim voters. The Mushawrat was so drunk with hatred for Congress and its High Command, so apathetic towards the Communists and other Left forces that it worked for no one and left Muslim voters without any guideline to support any candidate they liked. As a result, the only party that availed of Mushawrat's apathy was the Bhartiya Jana Sangh. The leaders of Mushawrat cannot deny the fact that the majority of Jana Sangh candidates were returned from the constituencies where Muslims had a sizeable chunk of votes.

It was really a matter of great shame for Mushawrat and the Muslim voters of Balrampur that a lady of Smt Subhadra Joshi's stature did not get their

votes. She was defeated by Sri Atal Bihari Vajpayee by a margin of thirty thousand votes whereas the Muslim candidate in that constituency gathered thirty two thousand votes. The Mushawrat can escape the responsibility by saying that it supported Smt Joshi even though its policy was to oppose the Congress en-bloc. But while saying so it should realise that such an excuse depicts its own hollowness as its support for Smt Joshi came at the eleventh hour, only a day before the polling started. On the other hand, if the Mushawrat was really sincere in its support to Smt Joshi then how could the Muslim candidate gather such a big number of votes. The same mistake was repeated by Mushawrat in Chandni Chowk constituency of Delhi wherein Muslim voters constituted nearly one-third of the total number of voters and the real fight was between the Congress and the Jana Sangh. The Congress candidate was Lala Shyam Nath, a tested friend of Muslims and a great

lover of Urdu. But even against such a friend a Muslim candidate was put up who succeeded in winning almost all the votes of Muslims. The result was not unexpected. Sri Shalwala, the Jana Sangh nominee defeated Lala Shyam Nath by the same number of votes which were cast in favour of Muslim candidate Late Hafiz Ali Bahadur. Here too Mushawrat can offer one or the other excuse but the fact is, that on many occasions directly or indirectly the Mushawrat helped the Jana Sangh. The increasing number of the Jana Sangh legislators in UP and in other northern States owe their seats to the Mushawrat's disastrous handling of Muslim politics.

As regards its hold over the Muslim masses, one would be tempted to say that it is simply a myth created by some out-dated and frustrated politicians to keep themselves politically alive without considering the Muslim interest. The younger element was, therefore, kept away.

In my own home-town when a branch of Mushawrat was to be opened, an emissary of the Mushawrat High Command was sent to convene the meeting of local leaders and appoint a three-man ad hoc committee to carry on the Mushawrat work. At the arrival of the emissary the meeting was called and without ascertaining public opinion, a three man committee consisting of the Ameer of the Jamat-e-Islami, of Jamiat-ul-Ulema and of the Tablighi Jamat, was appointed. It is interesting to note that all the three gentlemen were ascetics and completely ignorant of the political situation in the country. They could pray well for the welfare of the community but to understand the numerous and multifarious difficulties these sixty million people face today and then to fight for them was a task beyond their capacity. The result was that in the last General Election the local Mushawrat absolutely failed to influence the Muslim voters. In spite of its hatred of the Congress it could not stop Muslims from supporting the Congress nominee who happened also to be a Muslim. It was another thing

that the Muslim Congress man had to lose to a Jana Sangh supported candidate. This is not all. The history of Mushawrat's errors is staggering. Not that these errors were committed deliberately, but unless they are rectified the Mushawrat cannot acquit itself of the charge of strengthening the reactionary forces in India such as those of the Jana Sangh.

If the Mushawrat really wishes to deliver goods to Indian Muslims, it has to bear in mind that the polarisation process has started in the country. All the reactionary and communal forces are rallying round the Jana Sangh. In recent days there has been much activity in the Jana Sangh and Swatantra circles to form a joint platform body. On the other hand, progressive and secular forces such as the Communists, the young Turks among the Congress, the SSP, Republican and some other small groups are coming closer and closer. The Indian Muslims, being the largest single community have to decide, for which side to opt. But before taking any step they have to understand that Jana Sangh and its secret agents in other parties thrive upon spreading anti-Muslim feeling among the people.

It is here that Mushawrat can work. It can take the task of acquainting Muslims with these facts. It can mobilise public opinion in support of the Leftist forces so that a heavy blow may be dealt to the anti-secular reactionary forces bent on transforming India into a non-secular State.

It has to impress upon Muslims that for all the antithetical relationship between them and progressive forces they are destined to walk together and that a rational atheist is better than an irrational believer. The greater the realisation of these hard facts by Muslims the brighter the chances for Muslim and Leftist cooperation. The assumption that the progressive or socialist forces after coming to power will wipe out their religion betrays ignorance of both history and the local conditions. It is no secret now that even the Communists have come to realise that by antagonising religion they cannot advantage in a country like India.

Mushawrat has to realize that the issues like that of Family Planning and Personal Law are not the only issues that haunt the Indian Muslims today. The problems of the Indian Muslims are numerous. They are economically, socially, educationally and politically backward. Their trade is languishing day by day, the school and colleges are facing an acute shortage of funds, their number in Government and private services is decreasing every day; and above all they are faced with a sense of insecurity. Mushawrat, thus, has a wide field to work, and innumerable problems to solve. The time is undoubtedly out of joint but it can be set right. It simply requires sincerity of purpose and courage. The coming days will testify whether the Mushawrat has these assets.

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Railway Firemen's Case

P. C.

THE Railway Firemen's strike in the two Southern Railways which has been on since July 5, has all but paralysed the economy of the southern States and is costing the Railway exchequer more than Rs 50 lakhs a day at a conservative estimate.

Even if the strike is settled and some sort of agreement is reached with the firemen, it has raised many questions that need urgent solution. The most important is that there must be established an independent body which would go into the rationale of the workloads, the working conditions and the wages of the different categories of railway workers. The bodies so far constituted from time to time have proved their bias and ineptitude in this sphere.

The Firemen's strike has been variously dubbed as illegal and irresponsible even by certain trade union leaders whose sympathies should have normally been with the firemen. However, before we brush the strike aside as irresponsible and count up the cost it has entailed the economy, it is only fair to examine the grievances of the firemen and then decide whether the onus of the strike lies with the firemen or the Railway Administration.

Every Railwayman will agree that the fireman's job is manually the most difficult on the entire railways. In every steam locomotive there is the driver and two firemen. The job of the first fireman is to continuously feed the fire which must never be allowed to go down, and that of the second fireman to break the huge quantity of coal that is required by the engine on the run. Besides, this the first

fireman also assists the driver in seeing the signals on his side. The nature of the Firemen's job is continuous and intensive and while he is in the engine, he has no respite. Besides the arduous physical work he has to put in, the very nature of his job which ties him to the roaring furnace summer and winter can well be imagined.

The Firemen's major grievance is that they have often to put in 14 hours of duty which may even stretch on to 17 hours or more. Even though they are paid overtime for this, the firemen find themselves incapable of putting in such long working hours in such trying conditions. Their demand is that their duty hours be restricted to twelve hours from the time they sign on in the railway yard—and not twelve hours of running duty which is expected of them—over and above the time they wait while the train is being made ready.

Sri Anandan Nambiar, the Vice-President of the Dakshin Railway Employees Union, told *Mainstream* in an interview, the firemen's part of the story. He said that most of the trouble arose due to lack of co-ordination and efficiency in the Railway operations. If the Driver and the Firemen were called to the yard, or in railway parlance, signed on at eight in the morning their train might not get clearance for three hours or more. But this, Sri Nambiar pointed out, was not their fault that they had to waste three hours in the yard. It is only when the train leaves the yard that the period of running duty starts for the firemen and this he must put in for twelve

solid hours before he can put in a claim for rest. But even after putting twelve hours of this strenuous work, the train crew may not get relief. It is only when the train reaches a spot where an alternative crew is available that the crew can sign off. This may often stretch his working day to anything between 14 and 17 hours.

It seems barbarous that the Railway Board should balk at conceding the twelve hours' duty time to the firemen which even by normal standards seems much too long. What is even more surprising is that both Sri C. M. Poonacha and Sri Parimal Ghosh—the people's representatives in the so-called welfare state—should forget the human angle completely and stand on false notions of prestige. Sri Parimal Ghosh had personally agreed to Sri Nambiar's contention that the firemen's duty should be restricted to twelve hours but he refused to give an assurance in writing. The Railway Board perhaps feels that if it gives in to the firemen's demand, the other categories of staff too may be emboldened to put in their respective claims. But this is no reason why firemen should continue to put in slave labour. Even otherwise there is no rationale behind the wages drawn by different categories of labour. The fireman who puts in a 14 hour day gets a little more than a peon in an office who works for seven hours.

The second fireman is in the grade of Rs 80-95. The peon is in the grade of Rs 70-85, while the first fireman in grade B gets Rs 100-130 and the first fireman in grade 'A' gets Rs 125-150. However the running

staff gets an allowance of Rs 1.75 for 100 kilometer which is most inadequate.

The firemen are under three grades, A, B and C. The firemen in grade A are directly recruited and their minimum educational qualification is matriculation. They are groomed to become drivers. The firemen in grades B and C are mostly illiterate. But the duties of the first firemen whether he is of grade A or grade B is exactly the same; hence there is little justification for making a discrimination in the wages of the two grades. This is another reason for heart-burning in the service.

However, the grievances of the firemen have been growing over the years. Sri Nambiar pointed out that before Independence in the Company Railways the duty hours of the firemen were restricted to twelve hours. But after Independence both the mileage and the traffic increased many fold and though the non-essential railway staff spawned with Parkinsonian profusion, the staff on which the actual running of the train depends has not increased in proportion to the workload. The standards of efficiency too have fallen. The recurrent delays and general ineptitude in operational matters had made the life of the firemen extremely difficult.

After Independence, to allay the discontent of the staff, Justice Rajadhakshya was appointed to look into the working conditions of the different categories

of the railway staff. He gave his award in 1951. He placed labour in three categories, intensive, continuous and essentially intermittent.

Sri Rajadhakshya, strangely enough, classified the firemen under the category of continuous and not intensive! It is difficult to know how Sri Rajadhakshya has listed the job of the driver and the fireman as merely continuous while those of the lever man, Yard Foreman, shunting or coupling Jamadar or shunting or coupling porter, wireless operator and others are all listed as intensive. One is tempted to conclude that the learned Judge accepted whatever was told to him by the Railway officials. The Rajadhakshya award, even otherwise, is full of anomalies. For the running staff it permits 12 hours of running duty plus extra time for taking over and handing over at terminal stations. This extra time allowed is the loophole which the Railway Administration has exploited to the full.

Under Indian Railways Act (1956) section 71 (C)2 states: "A Railway servant whose employment is continuous shall not be employed for more than 54 hours a week on the average in any month."

Section 71D(1) says: "A Railway servant whose employment is intensive or continuous shall be granted each week commencing on Sunday a rest of not less than 30 consecutive hours." Section 71D(2) says: "Locomotive

or traffic running staff shall be granted each month a rest of at least four periods of not less than 30 consecutive hours each or at least five periods of not less than 22 consecutive hours each including a full night."

As all railway employees, these provisions are constantly violated. Last year too the firemen had gone on strike on July 26, but on the assurance of the Railway Minister Sri C.M. Poonacha that he would look into the grievances of the firemen, the strike was called off on August 3. The Minister had also promised that there would be no victimisation. But this promise too was not kept. The Secretary of the Firemen Council of the Trichy Division Sri Rathnasabapathi was removed from service. And more than 200 firemen were charge-sheeted. One of the demands of the present strike is that there would be no victimisation either on account of the first agitation or on account of the present one.

The third issue on which there is dispute is that of the revision of the TA and mileage of the firemen. The Railway Minister had appointed after the last agitation a sub-Committee of the Railway officials to review this question but so far nothing has come out of it.

This is in short the brief of the firemen's. It is difficult to see on what grounds the Railway Board can throw it away.

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Regional Disparities in Kashmir

GULAM RASOOL MATTO

THE three regions of the present State of Jammu and Kashmir—namely Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh together constitute an entity and it would be wrong to disturb the territorial or regional boundaries of the present State. The present State is an economically viable State and each region cannot stand on its own legs independently. If there are any regional imbalances, as I think there are, these should not lead us to think in terms of separation or dismemberment of the three regions of the present Jammu and Kashmir State.

If any of the regions, for its peculiar circumstances, deserves a better attention in development or allocation of funds for development programmes, the other two regions shall have to accept the realities of the situation in a spirit of accommodation and brotherhood.

While considering the development of the three regions of the State an attempt is made to equate the three regions of the State regarding expenditure on development. This tendency is particularly found in equating Kashmir and Jammu regions. This is not a healthy tendency and I feel that Kashmir has suffered tremendously on this account. Kashmir is placed geographically in such a situation that unless special attention is given to it, it cannot develop. I am not saying this in a philosophical tone or on political grounds but simply on pure and simple economic factors. This year's winter has proved that beyond any shadow of doubt. Jammu region is geographically placed in such a position that most of this region has no prob-

lem of communication. All the year round people can come and go to any place in the world from any part of this region, can communicate with any place and trade in any commodity they like without any natural bottlenecks. This is not the position with regard to Kashmir. In spite of the Jawahar Tunnel, its communications get disrupted. We in Kashmir cannot import our essentials of life or export our products from Kashmir without hindrance due to these disruptions. I, therefore, feel that for our very existence, the Government has to pay a lot of attention to Kashmir.

I am of the opinion that Government is not doing what it should do on this account. Even after twenty years of Independence, we are cut off from the outside world for weeks and weeks together. This is not only during the winter months but even in summer when the spring rains or monsoons disrupt the National Highway between Banihal and Kud and our communications are disrupted. A crash programme is needed in this direction and I feel that compared to Jammu region where there is no such problem, Kashmir is not getting a fair deal from the Government in the matter of communications.

Jammu Province has the advantage of getting a railhead upto Jammu during the next Plan period; it has already got it upto Kathua. I feel that in this age of technology and science, it may not be difficult to have Railways upto Kashmir. I feel that nothing is being done either by the Central Government or the State Government in this

connection. I have not come across even a statement from any responsible leader suggesting that even a survey be made by competent engineers of the country or some from Europe where similar conditions prevail. Until this is done, Kashmir cannot make any headway in industrialisation. This is a clear discrimination being meted out to Kashmir compared to Jammu.

Regarding developmental expenditure as allocated to different regions, Kashmir region is not getting a fair deal. In this connection nobody seems to bother about the actual and prospective expenditure made in the different regions which may have a bearing on the future of the region and the people inhabiting that region. I have in view the expenditure on long-term investments, both in the public and the private sectors. As stated above, Jammu region has the advantage of communications and the recent development regarding extending the railhead to the farthest possible point of this region. So any industry, whether that is in the large-scale, medium-scale or small-scale sector can be set up there as conveniently and as economically as in any other region in the plains of the country.

Large plants of textiles, ceramics etc. have already come up and we foresee that huge projects of cement, coal-mining, hydro-electricity, fertilizers etc. will come up very soon in Jammu region and one can easily imagine the bright future of industrial development in Jammu in times to come.

I am only too glad that such projects are coming up in a part of our State. The Government,

however, has to see that this development is not lop-sided and Kashmir region also gets some share out of these projects. I am not one of those who advocate that these projects must be in Kashmir even if these are not economically feasible or possible; but in whatever sphere there is a possibility for large and medium scale industries, to be set up in Kashmir, they should be taken-up. It is admitted that the scope of large scale industries in Kashmir is extremely limited but the Government has done nothing so far in this direction. Government has to think that an investment, whether in the private or the public sector, that is being made in Jammu region should also be made in Kashmir region in the spheres in which there is a possibility.

Since four or five years after independence, we have been hearing that due to the availability of raw material in the forests of Kashmir, a paper pulp and a rayon grade pulp plant will be set up in the Kashmir region by the Government. During the last eight or ten years, a lot is being said about it but the Government is not doing anything to establish these plants in which, experts believe, there is a great potentiality.

In Kashmir, we have some medium-scale industries, small-scale industries, silks, handicrafts and fruit industry. I shall be content and feel that an equal opportunity is being afforded to us if the Government makes investments in these sectors on the developmental side on a sizable scale; and correspondingly investments in large scale industries is being made in Jammu province. It is distress to find that the Government is not paying due attention to Kashmir in this respect. Perhaps it feels that this would entail large investments and in Jammu on the other hand, large scale industries in desired number have not so far been set up. In other words for fear of being accused of preferential treatment to Kashmir, the Government is placing a premium on inaction or inefficiency of the entrepreneurs in the Jammu region, as compared to

entrepreneurs in Kashmir in these industries which badly need assistance. If enough large scale industries have not come up in Jammu during the recent years, it is not for lack of natural facilities or factors. It may perhaps be due to the aminosity of our neighbouring country, that may be weighing heavily with the people who wish to set up these industries there; or perhaps this may be due to the resistance of the Central Government in locating any Central project in the region.

It is common knowledge that due to the railhead being near, the Jammu industrialists get their coal, a very important fuel needed in industrialisation, at less than one-third of the price that a Kashmir industrialist can get. The freight charges to be borne by the industrialists in Kashmir are so enormous that we cannot think of any industrial progress. These disadvantages are not shared by our compatriots in Jammu region. Regional imbalances can be obviated only when these disadvantages, that the people in Kashmir Region of Jammu and Kashmir State, have to face are made up by helping them in other fields which may not possibly be existent in the Jammu Region. I feel that if this state of affairs is allowed to continue, Kashmir Region will be badly affected.

Problem of Power

In the case of power development, Kashmir has been ignored during recent years. We have had no power generation after the Sindh Project was commissioned in 1955 except some Diesel sets. It may however be added that due to the potentialities of large-scale industries in Jammu region, enough power is required there. I feel that more and more projects of power generation should be undertaken there but the neglect made by the Government towards Kashmir during the last two Plans in respect of power generation is grievous. As is well known, hydroelectric projects do not take less than ten years to materialise and if the Government is now undertaking surveys and preliminary works

in Upper Sindh and Lower Jhelum, it will not be before ten years that we shall be able to reap the harvest. I understand that the progress in these two projects is not what it should be and I foresee chaotic conditions in power supply position to even small-scale industries in Kashmir for the next ten years. In Jammu Region, several projects are nearing completion and I feel that in this field, the interests of Kashmir have been neglected as compared to our brethren in Jammu.

As regards the import of raw material for our industries in Kashmir, the supply of essentials of life and other consumer goods, there we are clearly at a disadvantage as compared with our fellow citizens in Jammu. Apart from the need of procuring these things at almost the same rates in the entire State in order not to give rise to any sense of disparity, I feel it is in the interests of emotional integration and economic necessities that so long as we do not have the railhead upto the Kashmir Valley, the freight for goods imported by the Valley people should be reduced to the minimum. What the Government has done on the contrary is that the freight charges were further increased in 1967 for which there was no justification. This is a direct burden on the people living in Kashmir, our brethren in Jammu could share our burden indirectly if the State Government subsidises this freight.

I feel that there was no need for even the State to subsidise it if only the Government were amenable to reason and do away with the cartels and monopolies that are rampant in the transport industry, in spite of protests from the trade and the consumers. This is a clear discrimination against Kashmir region and needs to be done away with.

The other source of sustenance to Kashmir is Tourism. Although much is said and talked about it, I feel that we have not very much surpassed the pre-partition figures of tourists, and last year the number of tourists that visited Kashmir was less than two lakhs. Kashmir has so much to offer for any tourist that if millions of tourists can be attracted to such

places like Spain, France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Greece, why should our figures be so low. There may be many factors for that but the one that stands out prominently over others, in our opinion, is the lack of facilities available in Kashmir to the tourists, particularly those coming from foreign countries. By way of adequate hotel accommodation etc. that could earn millions for us in coveted foreign exchange. That is only possible when money is invested in creating those facilities. Nothing tangible has been done by the Government, perhaps with the idea in view that this field required lot of investment (although it is being forgotten that this investment will bring in huge dividends to us in return) and unless a matching investment against this Head is made for the Jammu Region, it will be considered a discrimination. It is not being realised that apples can only be grown in Kulu or Kashmir and not in Rajasthan and mangoes can be grown only in Maharashtra or UP (or even in Jammu) and not in Kashmir.

Agriculture forms the backbone of our economy and the food procurement prices being paid to our cultivators is not the same as is being paid to these agriculturists in Jammu Province. This is a tremendous disadvantage to our people and a clear case of discrimination. In comparison with the prices paid for buying rice from our neighbouring State of Punjab, our Government pays our agriculturists much less and hence this is a clear case of discrimination.

In order to earn foreign exchange, we have a great potential in handicrafts, walnuts, silk and tourism. Nothing has been done by the Government to boost the export of these items. No market surveys have been made and not a single trade delegation has been sent to any foreign country from the State during the last twenty years. I feel that the Government has not made any investment in this developmental work because they would first need to send a similar delegation from Jammu or include some representatives from that region for fear of

being held guilty of discrimination, even if Jammu may not have anything to offer in this field. For the development of handicrafts, silks and forests in Kashmir, sufficient funds are not being earmarked with the result that the desired and possible headway could not be made in this direction. Our small-scale industries suffer for want of raw material, both local and imported. In certain industries like textiles and roller flour mills we are not being treated at par with similar units in the rest of the country because of non-application of some beneficial acts on the statute book at the Centre. In short, in those fields where we have a potential, we cannot make the desired progress for lack of attention by the Government which suffer from the obsession that a balance must be created with the Jammu region before such an investment can be made.

Other Characteristics

There are other fields characteristic to the region of Kashmir like horticulture, agriculture and certain sectors of trade and commerce in which special attention has got to be given compared to the region in Jammu. Conversely there may be some fields in Jammu which are peculiar to that region alone. I feel so far as Kashmir is concerned, expenditure on those items has not been made to the desired extent for fear of being accused of disparity. Even with regard to employment in commercial establishments, banks, public sector undertakings, insurance companies etc. outside the State, the Jammu region has an advantage over their brethren in Kashmir in several factors including the element of climate. This could be made good by increased employment in these institutions in Kashmir itself.

I have given in brief the disadvantages being actually felt by people in Kashmir as compared to Jammu region. I now wish to analyse as to what should be the criterion in going in for developmental expenditures equitably between the three regions of Jammu and Kashmir State. Now, area can not be the basis

because if that were so, Ladakh will top the list, although it has thousands of square miles of arid and uninhabited areas. Population can become a basis only in certain fields of developmental expenditure. Even areas can become a base in certain fields where for instance, roads are to be constructed, although here too, the importance of a particular road on which expenditure is to be made, to the State and to the country as a whole will have to be taken into consideration. In my opinion, it is hardly 20 to 25 per cent of the expenditure that can be based on the area or the population basis. The balance has to be spent keeping in view the potentialities, the needs and requirements, geography, topography, importance of the region to the State, to the country, importance in the world as a place of interest, payment of taxes, share in the building up of the funds for development and scores of other considerations. These are considerations that have to be weighed coolly, without any emotionalism.

I think a great responsibility has devolved upon the newly-appointed Gajendragadkar Commission on Regional Disparities to determine as to how the resources available to the State Government are being *shared equitably*. To my mind, this is not an easy task because I feel that I, from Kashmir region or another from Jammu region, will give his own interpretation to the term, "equitably". I have tried to pose this problem squarely in its proper perspective; and the Commission will have done a great service to the State and the country as a whole if the inhabitants of the different regions of the State of Jammu & Kashmir understand and appreciate the import and the meaning of the word "equitably".

I feel so far as Kashmir is concerned, for six months in a year, we are completely neglected. During the days of British rule, they had kept two Capitals, one in Simla for the summer and the other in New Delhi for winter. I might have sympathy for the British for having two capitals. They did it for Uttar

Pradesh (then United Provinces) or for Bihar or many other States. England is a cold region. Summer heat was unbearable for the British. Immediately after Independence, the Central Government and the State Governments did away with the practice. Not only did it appear a legacy of the colonial rule but it involved a tremendous amount of expense to the Exchequer, besides inconvenience to the native staff who had to move bag and baggage every six months. In the case of Jammu & Kashmir State, it was not a case of the colonial legacy. The Dogra rulers belonged originally to Jammu region and after the Province of Kashmir came under their rule, they naturally combined administration with pleasure by going to Kashmir in summer and to Jammu in winter. After the accession of the State to the Indian Union, the pleasure of the rulers also came to an end. There was, therefore no justification for a small State like Jammu & Kashmir to have the luxury

of two Capitals. Obviously the Governments that came into Power after 1947 thought that if the British or the Rulers in Jammu & Kashmir enjoyed this pleasure, why should they forego it. Obviously they wanted to have the best of both the regions; enjoying summer in the salubrious climate of the Kashmir Valley and winter in the sun-bathed Jammu City of Jammu Province (which Justice Ayyangar once told the present winter was more enjoyable than the summer in Kashmir.) We have seen every year and particularly this year, how our people suffer during the winter when the whole Government was in Jammu and except on one occasion no Minister of the State Government visited the frozen valley. It is nothing less than a catastrophe if the Government is not there when it is most needed. Our problems are accentuated only in winter when we have nobody to look after us. The absence of the Secretariat in Srinagar creates serious problem for the industria-

lists who have these days to look to the Government for every help. Not only that, I feel the local administration also suffers considerably. The mice begin to play when the cat is away.

In my opinion this is a great irritant to the people of the valley and creates a sense of isolation in them. I want the Capital to be at one place throughout the year. Our poor State, besides the reasons given above, cannot afford this luxury. This practice must be done away with as soon as possible. If all other considerations for selecting a capital weigh with Jammu as compared to Kashmir, I would not mind that the Capital be based permanently in Jammu. But if, after thorough study and taking into consideration all the pros and cons, Srinagar is selected as the Capital, our friends from Jammu region should have no hesitation in accepting that.

This to my mind is the greatest irritant we feel, and the remedy lies in making only one Capital for the State of Jammu & Kashmir.

CHECKMATE IN THE DESERT (Continued from Page 10)

struggle. But the guerrilla activities, which have caused much damage to the occupying forces, are kept up to remind Israel and the world that the Arabs may have lost the war but they have not surrendered their right to regain it.

The guerrilla activities also divert Israeli energies from concentrating on war preparations and keep a fairly large number of armymen and civilians engaged in dealing with them. They also prevent the chances of collaboration by the 'unpatriotic Palestinian elements with the enemy'. The guerrillas have until now frustrated Israeli attempts to win over some influential Palestinians and use them as quislings. The idea of creating a separate "Palestine entity" out of the occupied West Bank of Jordan will be difficult to materialise if the guerrillas continue to receive moral and material help from Cairo and Amman. Damascus too, it seems, would be compelled to extend support to

them under the pressure of Arab public opinion. There is strong feeling in the Arab world that force will have to be used to take back the territory which Israel has occupied by force.

It is improbable that Israeli will again agree to surrender even less useful Arab territory without getting from the Arabs the terms and conditions—the root cause of the tension and the three wars. The Israelis want: legal recognition from Arabs, free passage throughout the Suez Canal and the Straits of Tiran, absorption of the millions of Palestinian refugees thrown out of their country by the Arab countries without giving them compensation, retention of the Gaza strip and Syria's Golan Heights, and total annexation of Jerusalem as part of the State of Israel. These are the items they plan to discuss with the Arab leaders when they suggest 'direct' or 'indirect' talks with them. The situation is that no Arab leader, however, powerful he might be, can agree

to any one of these conditions and expect to survive.

In Israel also no leader, including Moshe Dayan, can agree to abandon even one of these items and lead a successful political life.

Arab and Israeli leaders and their people may talk of peace and political solutions but the idea of war as the only solution has made a permanent place in their minds.

—July 15

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Accept the Offshore Challenge

Oil Commentary. Vol V, No. 13, May 15, 1968, published by Petroleum Information Service, 22 Pusa Road, New Delhi-5.

INDIA must accept the challenge and undertake the gigantic task of offshore drilling off the Kutch coast, urges Sailen Ghosh, Director of the Petroleum Information Service. In an 11-page article in the *Oil Commentary* of May 15, Ghosh says, "Acceptance of the challenge is imperative not only for the ONGC, not even for our expertise in oil, but for the country's discovery of its own strength and release of a resolute will."

In fact, for the past five years and more, it has been Sailen Ghosh's constant endeavour to show that India has the necessary talent (provided hide-bound rules of procedure and appointments, framed by the British rulers, were not used to smother it) to undertake on her own most of the nation-building activities planned and executed since Independence, but most of which had been unfortunately handed over to outsiders under a self-defeating process of foreign collaboration.

The article does not only deal with the problem of offshore drilling. It covers a much wider canvas because, as he says, the "offshore exploration issue raises questions of basic approach and attitudes".

Very appropriately entitled "A Bold Initiative can Turn the Tide in the Country's Fortunes", the article starts with rejecting the hitherto sacrosanct premise that the country can ill-afford to

lose time in developing indigenous expertise and therefore, must necessarily depend on foreign collaborations for speedy economic growth.

Ghosh says, "If time were the only decisive or even the most important factor, there should have been no refinery or steel plant in the public sector, for the established international firms would have in any case done the job *much quicker*. Looking back, we find that in spite of the delays in their construction, we were wise enough not to decry national effort. Today, because of the experience we have gained, the construction of a refinery now takes much less time; we can play a large part in the design and erection of new refineries with maximum indigenous components. The profits remain within the country; we have greater freedom in planning other industries based on their products and greater bargaining power for a lower crude price."

It is on this basic consideration that Sailen Ghosh has built up his case for self-reliance in regard to offshore drilling, against very "weighty" arguments of those who would prefer to hand over the entire operation to the Tenneco of the USA on the basis of a 51:49 per cent shares. No doubt, entrusting the work to the Indian engineers and technicians would "delay" the actual launching of the project by about three to four years.

Again, it will be definitely costlier in the initial period than the proposed collaboration arrangement. But the more important point is, "once we leave the deeper drilling to foreign care, our own sense of urgency in training up two hundred drillers and production engineers will be lost."

It will, of course, require bold decisions and willingness to take risks at the very top. But was it not a bold decision to give the go ahead signal for exploring the virgin Cambay region when several "experts" had refused to characterise any part of India other than Assam, as oil bearing? A similar bold decision was taken when the ONGC was permitted to partner an offshore venture in Iran. And now has come another occasion, no doubt, with much more complicated problems, for the country's leaders to show their mettle.

It is not enough to merely talk of self-reliance or even to venture on one's own into fields where the risk is recognisedly balanced. It is in such ventures as the offshore drilling that the national leadership's sincerity about promoting self-reliance will be tested. Basically, it means a political approach and a political attitude. "The cornerstone of a genuine policy of self-reliance is to stand on one's feet, even though it permits taking help from others. The attitude should be: even if no

help comes from anywhere, we shall do it ourselves. We shall be at our best only when we prepare ourselves psychologically for this situation," says Sailen Ghosh.

This issue of the *Oil Commentary* has been christened "Off-shore Drilling Number" and has a number of useful articles on this subject besides the one by Ghosh. It also includes a few others which the interested readers will find informative and educative.

One would like to draw particular attention to the one entitled "Nitrophosphate is an Adequate Source of Nitrogen and Phosphate", based on a paper published by the Planning and Development Division of the Fertiliser Corporation of India. Amidst the continuous chant of imperatives of the high-cost superphosphates for our

involving large imports of sulphur, this article should succeed in inducing our policy-makers to start fresh thinking.

With a very high margin of profit in the production and sale of superphosphates, the desire of the vested interests to keep the country's attention riveted to this type of fertilisers is quite understandable. Nitrophosphate is comparatively cheaper and, hence, the margin of profit in it is much lower.

The article blows up the myth built around superphosphates of the desire of the vested interests to keep the country's attention and forcefully presents the case of nitrophosphates as equally suitable. It has to be remembered that in Europe, which has no sulphur supplies of its own, the use of superphosphates has not gained

where sulphur is available in sufficient quantity, that use of superphosphates came into vogue. But even in USA today, there is much less of sulphur in fertilisers.

A useful feature in this special number are the box items on relevant issues of planning, decision-making, off-shore drilling, etc., with suitable editorial notes and explanations. The feature "Answers in Parliament" in this issue carries an enormous amount of ready information on the developments in Indian petroleum and fertiliser industries.

This issue of the *Oil Commentary* can serve as a guide and handbook for all those interested in the fascinating prospects of India undertaking offshore oil drilling on her own.

S. P.

MOSCOW TO PINDI (Continued from Page 9)

was in 1956. He was bold enough to go in for the Tashkent strategy of extending positive influence over both India and Pakistan. Since then he has been working on this dual policy: nobody can deny that despite a lot of uncertainties in the Indian scene, the present Moscow line has not deviated from befriending the Government of India even without Nehru at its helm; equally painstakingly Moscow has been cultivating Pakistan.

It is evident that when Kosygin writes to Indira Gandhi assuring her that the Soviet approach to Pakistan would not be at the expense of India, it is not a piece of empty rhetoric but the axiom of a policy. Viewed from New Delhi or Rawalpindi, this attempt at enforcing a dual friendship may seem an impossible task, but from the Soviet Union's geopolitical interest, such a task has become a 'must' today. This may need tight-rope walking but a skilful tight-rope walker need not necessarily trip; and if he succeeds he wins the applause of all.

It is therefore nothing unusual for Moscow to assure

Pakistan that the Soviet arms to India is no threat to her security just as it is assuring India that the Soviet release of arms sale to Pakistan could not be a threat to this country's security. It is perhaps difficult just now for Indian public opinion with its own series of armed confrontations with Pakistan, to feel totally assured; at the same time, the Soviet Union's serious efforts to keep peace in the subcontinent need not be dismissed as mere airing of platitudes. The leverage that Moscow has been able to gain in both the countries will no doubt help her to further her own policy of promoting stability and peace in the Indo-Pak subcontinent.

An interesting tailpiece for this commentary can be made out of the timing of the Soviet notification about the withdrawal of the arms embargo in favour of Pakistan. It was very nearly expected when Kosygin visited Pakistan in April, but strangely enough, it did not come off then. A point of speculation for international observers may very well be, as to why this came with General Yahya Khan's visit to

Moscow. For a Pakistani it was a singular honour to have made this breakthrough. Before the man in the street in Lahore or Rawalpindi, General Yahya Khan today is known as the man who could bring the Soviet arms to Pakistan. In the strange world of Pakistan's politics, the armed forces constitute the only solid base for power. Could it be that the Pak watchers on the Kremlin towers are trying to spot the man who might succeed the ailing Ayub?

(The second article in this series will appear next week.)

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at every level and in every section of public life. *Patriot* has rightly declared in an editorial that it values public support more than advertisements. The Andhra Government's arrogant action will not thus have the effect it was intended to have. Nevertheless, it is necessary to consider the implications of the action in terms of the attitude of those in power to those in opposition to them, for the future of Indian democracy depends a great deal on this factor.

The Andhra Government has demonstrated beyond doubt that the State Governments cannot always be trusted to carry out decisions like those taken by the National Integration Council at Srinagar, in the proper spirit. On the other hand, the danger is that such decisions will be used as a pretext to harass and if possible put down anti-Establishment newspapers-which are also anti-communal. The State Governments have the discretion to give or withhold advertisements, and this discretion, it is clear, can be and is being used for political purposes. It is no accident that many notorious communal newspapers do not find a place in the Andhra Pradesh list, which is largely one of papers which have deemed it necessary to bring to public notice the acts of omission and commission of the State Government. The State Government obviously felt it could take advantage of the atmosphere created by the National Integration Council meeting to wreak vengeance upon the newspapers which had had the audacity to point to the rotten areas in the State administration.

In the face of mounting public criticism of his Government's action, Chief Minister Brahmananda Reddy told the State Assembly early this week that the wording of the circular was not "comprehensive" and that it did not indicate "all the points" the Government had taken into consideration. He claimed too that the Government had not branded *Patriot* and *Link* as communal

papers. It is significant that he made these remarks and hinted at reconsideration of the position only after protests had poured in from all parts of the country and from public men belonging to different parties and persuasions. Even if under public pressure the State Government corrects its disgraceful error (if so mild a term as 'error' can be used to describe the action), the issues posed by the Black Circular and the mentality behind it need to be considered seriously by all sections of public opinion in India.

The Andhra action, for instance, raises a question of great importance to all those in our country who value unfettered discussion of public affairs. It is necessary to take stern steps to put down communal propaganda and activity as also all activity calculated to divide the people on religious, linguistic, regional and similar other reactionary grounds. At the same time, it is necessary to remember that among those in power are persons whose understanding of the requirements of democracy is close to zero and who will not hesitate to use any pretext to suppress critics in order to cling to power indefinitely. Not long ago the minority Gill regime in Punjab sought to win over newsmen by means of monetary awards. It is such men who are in power in several places in the country, and they constitute the biggest threat not only to the free and independent functioning of the Press but to democracy itself.

In these circumstances, it is important that while framing law to deal with misuse of the freedom of expression as in the case of communal and other divisive propaganda, Parliament and State Legislatures should provide ample safeguards against misuse of these powers to discourage legitimate criticism of Government. Arbitrary action of the kind undertaken by the Andhra Government should not be permitted in the interests of civil liberties. First and foremost, the grant or withholding of Government adver-

tisements should not hereafter be left to the whims and fancies of those temporarily in power but should be decided by a panel commanding public confidence on the basis of clearly laid down norms; and any action taken on this basis should be open to challenge in a court of law.

But even more important is the challenge the Andhra action represents to the forces of progress and secularism in this country. It would be wrong to consider it an aberration or the isolated action of a power-drunk clique; it is part, even if an unplanned part, of the war against those upholding the people's interests above all else. The stupid reason given in the Andhra circular is only meant to provide a thin cover for the real motive of fighting the sections standing for social and economic progress and equality. Unless it is seen as the beginning of a campaign by vested interests against the forces of change, it will not be easy to organise the people to resist and overcome the dark forces behind the Andhra circular. These dark forces are not confined to Andhra Pradesh; they occupy seats of power elsewhere too. Herein lies the danger; and herein the need for all sections which value freedom and democracy to join hands in the battle against reaction.

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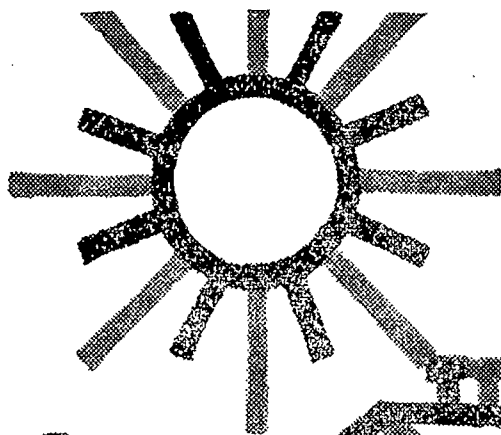
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SELF-RELIANCE vs VESTED INTERESTS

ONCE again the demand for national self-reliance fills the air. The immediate reason is the concern caused among the people of this country by the proposed sale of Soviet arms to Pakistan.

It is to be expected that certain political parties and groups tied to the apron-strings of the Western Powers and their monopoly capital should attempt to take advantage of the popular uneasiness to bring about strained relations between India and the Soviet Union. To them self-reliance is a good slogan which can be thrown in the face of the Government which had been talking about it but done little to take the country towards it.

It is unfortunate indeed that awareness of the need self-reliance becomes noticeable among our rulers only times of actual or anticipated crisis. It is common knowledge that those in power talked a great deal about self-reliance in the wake of the Chinese aggression in 1962 and again after the Pakistani aggression and subsequent military conflict in 1965. But in each case the moment the crisis blew over the slogan of self-reliance was neatly packed up and placed in cold storage.

In fact, despite pompous declarations of intent to the contrary, the Government has continued to be more and more subservient to Big Business and its allies and collaborators abroad. The massive popular anger against the Americans after their arms and ammunition had been used by the Pakistani forces

to kill large numbers of our jawans did not prevent those in power at New Delhi from surrendering to American pressure over the question of devaluation of the rupee accepting the Asoka Mehta line, or from continuing the degrading dependence on PL-480 wheat under Sri C. Subramaniam's inspiration. Virtually all American "aid" has been aimed at strengthening the private sector with little assistance given for the purpose of creating the basic structure needed for national self-reliance. In contrast, Soviet assistance, in the spheres of oil, steel, defence production, etc., has almost entirely been aimed at helping this country achieve self-reliance so that it may function independently in international affairs as in the past.

It cannot be denied however that, irrespective of its scope and potentiality, the plan for Soviet arms sale to Pakistan underlines once again the importance of self-reliance. No country can legitimately be expected to shape all its policies to suit our needs to the last detail, even as no country however friendly to us can expect to be allowed to lay down our own policies for us.

The first thing to be remembered is that self-reliance cannot be achieved by merely talking about it. Despite the most eloquent appeals over the last six years we have not been able to make any progress towards this goal only because the Government in particular and political leaders generally have lacked the capacity to resist pressures in the contrary direction from big capitalists within the country and their powerful patrons abroad. Self-reliance cannot be achieved except with full and conscious participation in nation-building by the masses of our people. It can be achieved only when the major obstacles in the way are removed without hesitation, and these obstacles include the hold that a handful of monopoly houses have secured over the national economy, the entrenched bureaucracy which acts in collusion not only with national but also foreign vested interests, and the groups of politicians who seek to build up their own private empires with the help of these interests.

If self-reliance is honestly aimed at, those who talk about it should act swiftly to organize a nationwide movement among the masses on the one hand and a massive struggle against vested interests continuing to have a hold on the economy. Only thus can self-reliance be achieved, and national independence asserted firmly.

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INDIRA: ENCOUNTER WITH REACTION

WITH all the fire and brimstone from the Opposition, the Government this week has held its ground in the storm over the Soviet decision to sell arms to Pakistan.

It was a formidable challenge but the Prime Minister seemed to have met it with skill and firmness. Out of the greatest ordeal so far in her career as the head of the Government, Smt Indira Gandhi has emerged politically much more significant today. The old dither seems to have gone, and it is a sign of her growing political confidence that she never let the initiative slip from her. Right from her first pronouncements in Gauhati and Calcutta immediately after the news of the Soviet decision, Smt Gandhi has combined a judicious mixture of concern at the Soviet decision with emphasis on Indo-Soviet friendship. The initial references were later made sharper in proportion to the mounting crescendo of attacks; in this way she perhaps tried to forestall the critics who were expected to exploit the issue to discredit her personally for having trusted Moscow overmuch.

At the same time, Smt Gandhi's demarcation from the Jana Sangh-Swatantra stand was sharp and clear. She reiterated the importance of Soviet friendship for this country and she positively explained the basis of Soviet calculation in trying to meet Rawalpindi's demand. The general feeling in New Delhi is that Smt Gandhi has been able to maintain the basic direction of her foreign policy, mainly adherence to friendship with Moscow, though the new developments have given a han-

dle to the entire anti-Soviet lobby.

However, the fear that was felt in New Delhi two weeks ago about the danger of the Right forces snatching the initiative in a political anti-Soviet blitzkrieg, has now been largely allayed. No doubt the Right forces have tried to make the maximum use of the opportunity—including a full-scale demonstration against the Soviet Information Department Office, the first time in New Delhi's history—but they could not overpower the Government either inside or outside the Parliament.

Here lies the contrast between 1962 and 1968. In 1962, after the Chinese attack, the Right gained the upper hand, leaving the Government almost in shambles, and it was only by heroic efforts Nehru could somehow salvage the policy of non-alignment when the Colombo Proposals were made and Moscow came out sharply against Peking.

There has been no such shock of a total crisis this time. For one thing, this time it is a diplomatic setback and not a military defeat; secondly, even the worst Soviet-baiter has not been able to say this time that Moscow has turned bellicose to New Delhi, while in 1962, Peking's main target was Nehru.

Granting sufficient allowance for the essential difference in the two situations, New Delhi observers have to concede that Smt Gandhi has at no stage let the Right opposition overwhelm her. Rather, she fought hard and with consummate skill, even going to the extent of naming the pro-American lobby as being active

during the current excitement.

While the Prime Minister could ward off the attacks of the Right Opposition, the main weakness in her position as revealed during the uproar over the Soviet arms decision lies in the situation inside the Congress Parliamentary Party. Some of the most vocal elements attacking the Soviet Union and the Government's policy of friendship with Moscow could be spotted inside the Congress Parliamentary Party: Smt Sucheta Kripalani's speech for instance, could have been delivered as well from the Jana Sangh or Swatantra benches. Incidentally, the choice of Congress speakers on the adjournment motion debate on the opening day of Lok Sabha session showed significant planning by the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, for all of them except one are marked by their pronouncedly Rightist leanings and anti-Soviet bias; none of the Left-inclined Congress MPs were included in the panel. Dr Ram Subhag Singh's preferences were indeed unmistakable.

Among her Cabinet colleagues, Sardar Swaran Singh did not hesitate to face the critics; his contribution throughout has been marked both by clarity and boldness; the exercise has enhanced his political status. In contrast, Sri Morarji Desai's defence of the Government's position helped the Right more. Sri Chavan spoke little but his brief intervention in Rajya Sabha was more in tune with Smt Gandhi's line than Sri Desai's.

Despite all their angry words and clever histrionics, the Opposition critics were not a unified team. While the Swatantra Party has been making a whole

hog attack on all contacts with the Soviet Union—from arms purchase to planning consultations—the Jana Sangh approach, particularly Sri Vajpayee's, has been skilful: even claiming that he would stand for friendship with Moscow.

These two parties of the Right have been able to make the most of the situation—the Jana Sangh more than the Swatantra. Besides, the Jana Sangh spokesmen, particularly Sri Vajpayee tries to attune himself to the Right inside the Congress and to that extent becomes more effective.

The Socialists over this episode have emerged more as a camp-follower of the Right than asserting an identity of their own. Sri Madhu Limaye's vitriolics against the Soviet Union were at par with the Swatantra, while the PSP was singularly ineffective. The controversy has shown up that with all the United Front alignments at the State level, there is a long way to go before the Socialists can join hands with the Communists and dislink themselves on many foreign-policy issues from the Jana Sangh.

Rather, there were many more in the Congress benches who would agree more with the Communists than the Socialists would. The spectrum of Indian political opinion can be measured less and less by labels alone.

* *

UNDERSTANDABLY, the Right forces are not content with mere propaganda attacks on the Soviet Union and thereby help to tarnish Moscow's image before the masses in this country—though by itself it is not a very insignificant gain. More ominously, they want to allure New Delhi into the US camp. Since their crusade coupled with Peking's armed aggression in 1962 could compel Nehru to seek US arms, there is a strong body of opinion ranging from Sri Masani to Sri Patil, which is today itching for a policy swing towards USA. In fact, some of the stalwarts of this school are quite happy that after all the Soviet Union is facing criticisms in India, and these are no longer reserved for America.

While defeat in the Parliament has been a big blow for them, they have not given up hope. This pro-US lobby knows its own strength in the Secretariat as well as in the various political parties. There is no doubt that it will try its utmost to subvert foreign and economic policies, banking on the current Indian confusion about the Soviet policy towards this subcontinent.

It is in this background that this week's Indo-US bilateral talks assume considerable significance. New Delhi observers have not failed to note that Mr Katzenbach and his team from the US State Department suddenly put off their visit last month, though it had been scheduled mainly at the instance of Washington. (In fact, it was the US Government which pressed for such bilateral talks, particularly after Mr Kosygin's visit in January led to the proposal for periodic Indo-Soviet consultations. The venue was fixed in New Delhi on the GOI's insistence).

Knowledgeable sources ascribe the one-month delay in Mr Katzenbach's arrival to Washington's desire to size up Indo-Pak reactions to General Yahya Khan's Moscow mission. For, Washington this has a double-edged significance: on the one hand, its impact on Pak-US relations and on the other, its reverberations on Indo-Soviet relations.

Undoubtedly, the prime US assignment for the Katzenbach mission would be to probe in depth the full possibilities of the Indo-Soviet relations getting strained in the coming weeks. It is significant that in place of a China expert, a Soviet expert has been inducted into the Katzenbach team at the last moment. The idea behind this move would be ostensibly to help New Delhi understand all the nuances of the Soviet policy, particularly in Asia: Mr Katzenbach himself is known to be in favour of a Sino-American rapprochement; obviously this may be used as a lever for isolating the Soviet Union.

In this connection, the State Department's anxiety to consoli-

date US foothold in the Indian Ocean region following the British withdrawal, is being sought to be covered up by the latest bogey about Moscow building a formidable Indian Ocean fleet. The US move in this regard appears to be two-pronged: to activate its allies in this region to work for some sort of a military alliance on the plea of filling in the vacuum (a suggestion to this effect was hinted at by the Shah of Iran when he met Smt Gandhi briefly at Palam a few months ago); and at the same time to ensure the patrolling in this region by its own fleets with a string of fuelling bases. Against this background, it is but natural that Washington is worried that the Indian Navy instead of being tied to the British Navy, should now have Soviet submarines and thereby asserting its independence even on the high seas.

Reports have already appeared in the US press about another significant item on the agenda that Mr Katzenbach has brought to New Delhi. For quite sometime, the US authorities are believed to be pestering New Delhi for the entire list of sophisticated weapons that India has purchased from the Soviet Union. The USAID are reported to be taking recourse to the Symington-Conte amendment in the US Congress aid bill last year, under which the money spent on purchase of sophisticated weapons by a country receiving dollar aid would have to be deducted from the quantum of its aid. But so far Washington has not been able to get India's Soviet shopping list. It is likely that Mr Katzenbach may make one more attempt to get it, now that the climate is slightly favourable for such a move.

It is on these counts that the strength of the Government's political leadership will be put to test: will the storm over the Soviet arms decision be allowed to be exploited by those who prefer capitulation to the West? Mr Katzenbach's brief-case on his return flight to Washington will largely provide the answer to that question.

July 23

N.C.

Soviet Arms Supply and Indian Reaction

K. R. GANESH

THE decision by the Soviet Union to supply some items of military hardware to Pakistan—thus lifting their self-imposed embargo—has caused serious concern and anxiety in the country.

The Indian reaction is natural, understandable, and was inevitable. The question is whether the Soviet leaders took this into consideration before they had decided to lift the embargo. Being seasoned and mature analysts of international affairs they could not have missed the likely Indian concern, and its exploitation by internal forces out to weaken Indo-Soviet friendship. What then was the overriding consideration which compelled them to take this step? Whether they have come to the stage in their analysis that India is to be equated with Pakistan? If so, what is going to be the likely Soviet attitude towards the key question of Indo-Pak conflict—Kashmir?

These and similar other questions are uppermost in the Indian mind. It is not the quantum of arms supply that disturb Indian opinion, but the realisation that the Soviet Union cannot any longer be taken for granted—thus weakening many of the fundamentals of the Indian foreign policy as it has evolved since independence, and making it vulnerable to professional anti-Soviet baiters and opponents of non-alignment.

Our Soviet friends should understand the Indian mind in relation to Pakistan. Without this it is not possible to appreciate

the Indian reactions. Pakistan was founded on anti-Indian hatred. A creation of Imperialism to weaken Indian independence, Pakistan has continued to maintain a posture of toughness, hostility and bellicosity in relation to India. Except the extreme communal forces none in India believes in the undoing of the fact of Partition. Repeated offers by this country for a non-aggression pact has been turned down by Pakistani leaders. The dictatorial regime in Pakistan has maintained its hold on the people on anti-Indian hysteria, thus shelving into background the internal question of real independence and democratic growth of Pakistan.

Three times during the last twenty years Pakistan has committed aggression on the Indian soil. Though a much smaller country in size and resources, Pakistani leaders' military mind has threatened the security of this country. Pakistan to India is like Israel to the Arab world and West Germany to European security even though she does not possess the industrial power and military strength of these countries. Nor has India the military strength comparable to her size and resources. Till 1962 we had neglected our military preparedness busy as we were with our internal development and relying as we did on a policy of world peace and peaceful co-existence, till the Chinese gave a big jolt to this country's thinking.

Therefore any addition to Pakistani aggressive military machine is a source of concern to India, since it disturbs peace on the Indian sub-continent. According to Indian opinion this is not even

in accord with the Tashkent spirit. It would be a great day when the Soviets could wean away Pakistan from China and its Western allies. That hope seems to be the over-riding consideration in Soviet thinking on Pakistan. But we have grave doubts about this. Our historical experience of Pakistan leads to contrary conclusions. The Pakistani would ask for a heavy price from the Soviets, which the latter would not be able to agree to consistent with their assurances to this country, their world interests and the fight for peace and democracy the world over.

But how do we as a nation react to this development? Indo-Soviet friendship is the bed-rock on which our country had asserted its independence and freedom in world affairs. The Soviet Union has given us substantial and generous economic assistance. Our ties with them, both economic and cultural, have strengthened with the passage of time. In the military sphere the Soviets have been our largest suppliers since 1964. The West had let down this country in 1962 and 1965—the most critical years. With this experience of Western antipathy we went to the Soviets for military hardware and they have readily met our requirements of modern weaponry—apart from helping to build the basis of national armament industry.

The Soviet leaders have given us assurances about the permanency of Indo-Soviet friendship. While having our own assessment of Pakistan policies,

(Continued on Page 38)

The author is a Member of Parliament belonging to the Congress Party.

India, Pakistan and the Soviet Union

ASWINI K. RAY

MOSCOW, as a factor in the politics of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent is of as recent an origin as the Tashkent Conference. Before this phase, the compulsions of maintaining Indo-Soviet relationship unimpaired, goaded Soviet and Indian attitudes in international relations.

The crucial test of this hypothesis is to be found in the phase of the India-China border war when the Soviets opted to forego their military and political ally in favour of non-aligned India. The Soviets gave us arms, built the MIGs for us, and earned the anger of China.

That was the high water-mark of Indo-Soviet friendship that needed careful nurturing all through, particularly in the initial phase when each other's bonafides were still not beyond doubts. In that phase, understandably, the Soviet attitude to Pakistan was largely shrouded by the same compulsions, coupled with some very "unfriendly acts" on the part of Pakistan, against the Soviet Union, as a part of the Western military alliance. During the U-2 plane incident, Khrushchov is reported to have marked off Peshawar, from where the spy flight originated, to be "wiped out" from the map. That, marked the low tide of Soviet-Pak relations.

In the present phase, the Soviet Union has resiled from these two extreme positions from which it viewed its relationship with India and Pakistan. From the layman's point of view and from the point of view of the traditional anti-Communist and anti-Soviet lobby, the present Soviet position has meant a two-

fold loss for India; firstly any let up in the Soviet attitude of vocal and demonstrative support for India in all its problems, is a loss to India. The second argument is partly fallacious and more pernicious, based on a rule-of-three logic; that, Pakistan is our enemy, and hence, any softening of attitude towards Pakistan by any third power is inimical to India. In other words, to be anti-Pakistan is the only way a third country could prove its friendship with India. To be taken in by this logic is to believe the hopeless isolation of India. It is probably by an extension of the aforesaid 'logic' that presently anti-Soviet feelings are sought to be whipped up in India by the same groups which have been embarrassing the Pakhtoons and the East Bengalis by their lip-sympathies for the causes which will be best served when left to those who are fighting for them in Pakistan.

The Soviet sale of arms to Pakistan, viewed in this perspective, puts the records of the bulk of the vocal opponents straight. That, the traditional anti-Soviet and anti-Communist groups would shout hoarse, "We said it so", as they are doing now, is a proof of their emotions and certainly not their logic. This is easy to understand, though not always as easy to deal with. But what is more disturbing in the present phase is the lack of conviction of a section of the Left which seems to be amazingly on the defensive.

To any sympathetic viewer of Indo-Soviet friendship, the Soviet sale of arms to Pakistan has posed some important questions, answers to which would indicate

the future trends in this beneficial bi-lateral relationship. The questions can be posed in the following forms:

a) whether the Soviet arms would in any way tilt the military balance in favour of Pakistan vis-a-vis India;

b) whether the sale, indicating growing Soviet-Pak friendship is at the cost of Indo-Soviet friendship; and

c) the impact of the Soviet-Pak friendship on India and Pakistan.

Taking up the first question, a distinction has to be made between US aid and Soviet sale of arms; the former is an elastic quantity depending upon the "good"-will of the giver and the relation of the receiver with the friends and enemies of the giver; the latter, is relatively inelastic, largely, conditioned by the purchasing power of the receiver in terms of exportable goods. This introduces a qualitative and quantitative difference in the Soviet arms coming to India and Pakistan respectively.

But more important than that is the reported nature and quantum of arms sale to Pakistan and also the Indian Defence Minister's categorical statement that the deal has not in any way altered the balance against India. The bulk of the Soviet arms would consist of defensive weapons like radar, transport planes, SAM missiles and some outmoded tanks which the Soviet Union is keen to dispose of in view of its own switchover to more sophisticated armaments. It is clearly different from the supersonic fighter-bomber planes, submarines and the Patton tanks with which the US

aided Pakistan. When we view this in the context of what the Soviets sold us including the MIG factory, submarine, and strategic weapons for all of which including the spares and training, we depend almost predominantly on the Soviet Union, there seems to be little grounds for the misgivings that the military balance in the subcontinent has been upset, even in any small measure, due to the present deal.

What is more important is the political implications of the arms deal. In this sphere, apart from the Soviet leaders' categorical assurances in all possible forms, that the Soviet-Pak friendship will never be at the expense of Indo-Soviet friendship, there are more compelling reasons to take the Soviet assurances at their face value.

The problem arises for those who have been gulled too much into believing in the traditional character of Indo-Soviet friendship, a myth, sedulously fostered as part of diplomatic necessity.

Despite Nehru's early personal admiration for the "fascinating experiment in the Soviet Union", India and the USSR had to stand the test of fire before the relationship blossomed into "traditional friendship". There were a series of overtures, constant heart-searching, and clarification of each other's bonafides before the Soviet Union could view India's non-alignment from initial scepticism to positive eulogy.

India's acceptance of the goal of socialism, the Korean war, the US Japan treaty, the Kashmir question, diplomacy in the United Nations particularly on the colonial and racial question, the Cold War, and disarmament, provided the testing grounds for each other's "traditional interests" without which no abiding friendship between any two countries could be sustained, as very aptly stated by the President of India after his Soviet visit. True, most of these issues have now become obsolete. But the most abiding factor, which still remains relevant to sustain Indo-Soviet friendship is the need for peace in the sub-

continent, in which the Soviet Union, more than any other country besides India and Pakistan, have a greater stake.

In this context, apart from the successive Soviet pronouncements to this effect, it is clear that the Soviet leaders cannot but be apprehensive of possible mischiefs in areas so close to their most vulnerable eastern borders, either by their new enemies or by their erstwhile cold-war rivals. The Tashkent agreement is a pointer to this Soviet apprehension and a clear proof of the Soviet bonafides for maintaining peace in this subcontinent. If in its anxiety to play the role of an 'Honest Broker' and be acceptable to Pakistan, it has soft-pedalled its earlier pronouncedly partisan support for India, the ultimate beneficiaries of the Soviet policy have been India and Pakistan as borne out by the Taskent conference and the results following it.

It is clear that, in terms of peace in the sub-continent, particularly between India and Pakistan; in terms of an acknowledgement of the mutual advantages of Indo-Soviet trade and technical and cultural cooperations; in terms of solving the Indo-Pak problems, including Kashmir, only by discussions between

India and Pakistan; in terms of talking Pakistan into believing that there is no military solution to Kashmir, and for India to believe that there is no harm in talking about a dispute which exists on Kashmir, the Soviet bonafides are clear.

It is no wonder therefore, that apart from the traditional anti-Communists in India, the most vocal opponents of Soviet friendship with Pakistan, including the present arms deal, have been those who have been preaching either for "undoing the Partition" or those whose fanciful ideas of "nationalising the Indian Muslims" can only be sustained in a general atmosphere of Indo-Pak hostility.

In other words, no genuine proponent of Indo-Pak friendship could grudge Soviet friendship with Pakistan which now remains the only potent catalytic agent for a peaceful subcontinent. Left to itself, or to some suspect agencies, Indo-Pak reconciliation seems more bleak than ever before in view of the prevailing trends in both the countries, in which, India, thanks a growing section of its fiery proselytizers, is not lagging behind.

There is another important sphere in which the Soviet interest to cultivate Pakistan's friend-

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ship is coordinate with India's long-term interest. One of the principal reasons for the Soviet overtures to Pakistan is to help the painfully emerging process in Pakistan away from the Western system of military alliances and, in the process, depending less on the Chinese, a lesson which Pakistan has learnt to its cost during the war against India. Pakistan in military alliance with the USA, or in political alliance with China is neither in the interest of the USSR, nor that of India. The Soviet aid and trade with Pakistan is aimed also to give greater manoeuvrability to Pakistan to ease out of the vicious circle and also to give a shot in the arm to the progressive, anti-imperialist forces inside Pakistan.

This is as much to India's interests as the softening of the rigorous Islamic undertone in the growing pact in Central Asia called the RCD between Pakistan, Iran and Turkey. Our own policy in West Asia is likely to be relatively more viable if the RCD is made to be less theocratic and more anti-imperialistic. In this regard too, the Soviet interest is conducive to India's own interest. There is a greater credibility to Soviet policies in this regard precisely because they are goaded by its own internal compulsions, and not by any sense of charity towards India's needs.

Last, but not the least, are

the impact of the sale of arms to Pakistan. Any objective student of Pakistani affairs knows that the major determinant of Pakistan's policies, particularly towards India, is her sense of insecurity, real or imaginary. Pakistan's disillusionment with the West, as also of China, coupled with the emerging trends in India, if anything, are bound to make this insecurity more real. Any stable peace with Pakistan could not be ensured while this insecurity prevailed. The Soviet support, is likely to make Pakistan feel more accepted, and less insecure, and thereby pave the way for more durable peace, which would be guaranteed by the compulsions of the Soviet national interest in this region.

It is clear then, that Indo-Soviet friendship is the primary postulate of the major Soviet policies in this region, in which Soviet-Pak friendship constitutes an important plank. Far from being inherently contradictory, as is sought to be interpreted, they are complementary for a peaceful subcontinent.

The third question which has remained un-answered is the internal repercussions in India of the Soviet sale of arms to Pakistan. It is indicative of our dependence on foreign powers that we wish to put forth internal repercussions as an excuse to deter a trend that is inherently in our own long-term national interest. It has

again focussed attention to the need for self-reliance, to which there can really be no substitute for the healthy growth of a nation and a really independent foreign policy.

True the deal would give a shot in the arm to the anti-Soviet, anti-Communist, and Right-wing forces within the country. But, surely this is a problem which we must ourselves know how to deal with. It will be a sad day for us when outsiders will have to find ways for us to check the growth of reaction in our country.

No one will deny that those who are now seeking to whip up anti-Soviet feelings have been consistently saying the same thing during the height of Indo-Soviet friendship, even when the Soviets were clearly partisan in our favour. The arms deal has only given them a new pretext. It remains for the Leftists and the progressives in the country to fight this trend fearlessly by putting the issues in the proper perspective instead of appeasing chauvinistic sentiments in the hope of short-term gains.

The common man still wants peaceful relation with our neighbours and self-reliance for our nation. The progressive and secular sections in this country have to harp on these two themes by an appeal to the intellect, which still remains the secret weapon of the Left.

Automation : Illusion and Reality

M. ATCHUTHAN

THE memorandum submitted by the All-India Insurance Employees' Association (the most concerned with job-eating electronic computers today) to the tripartite meeting on automation held in New Delhi on July 18 opens with a quotation: "...

in matters of fundamental importance like that of the adoption of automation (which seems to have serious results, short-term and long-term, even in advanced countries), it is right to insist on an overall comprehensive review of the problem and a public

announcement of policy before action in individual sectors is thought of or implemented."

The quotation largely sums up the trade union viewpoint, demanding a policy-formulation on automation within the framework of a national policy on jobs.

living standards and compulsions of economic growth.

The remarks quoted are from no less a person than the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Dr D.R. Gadgil. However, while people who should be in the know of things have taken such a realistic attitude, the fact remains that in the Life Insurance Corporation, there have been three one-day token protest strikes and one 50-minute strike by the 40,000 employees, before the Labour Ministry was persuaded to convene a tripartite forum to discuss what the trade unions call the "menace" of "job-eating computers."

Social Consequences

The problems of "automation" and its "social consequences" have arisen in this country not in the manner that the advanced industrialised countries experience them. Automation in industry, displacing blue collar workers by the thousand, is the major technological change in the advanced countries and automation in non-manual fields, i.e., automation of clerical work, is also growing apace. In India, its technological level in industry being what it is the technological take-off which automation implies is quite a distant dream. Nevertheless, we have on record industrial "disputes" over automation and big all-India strikes in protest against job-displacement caused by "technology"—in the non-manual sector.

Electronic computers made an entry into big commercial offices in India when the foreign oil companies brought in the sophisticated equipment and earned notoriety by introducing the "Early Voluntary Retirement" schemes, coercing the employees to "voluntarily" relinquish their job security. A Commission of Inquiry is not at work to ascertain whether labour laws were circumvented by the employers in this sector as well as the impact of computers on jobs and the "ethics" of the international oil cartels in promoting "hara kiri" ideas among their Indian employees.

The distinction of widening the area of industrial unrest over computers should go to the State sector, and particularly the Life Insurance Corporation of India. While the havoc created in oil jobs was patent and the Government was being forced to intervene to protect job security, the LIC bosses, without consulting the recognised trade union organisation, decided on bringing in two computers to begin with. One of these computers has been installed in Bombay and the other is to be installed at Calcutta.

The experience in oil and the threat to jobs in the LIC brought wide sections of the trade unions together and there is a body to coordinate the campaign at the national level—the Committee Against Automation. The Committee has held two national conferences so far, and at these conference all major trade union centres and representatives of political parties have expressed concern over attempted computerisation attacking white collar jobs.

High Pressure Sales Campaign

Some of the Big Business houses have also hired the computers and the Government of India has begun setting up Computer Centres, to house the Honeywell computers gifted to this country by one of the US computer manufacturing firms.

Computers have become a big value international merchandise, and manufacture and trade in these machines are controlled by giant monopoly concerns. There is also some amount of in-fighting among the monopolies to enlarge their markets. The British Government has recently gone to the help of the computer-makers in UK and a giant company has been floated with the merger of the International Computers and Tabulators, Plessey and English Electric. This British combine has entered into a collaboration deal with Bharat Electronics in Bangalore, a State sector undertaking, to make electronic data processing equipment in India. This International Business Machines (IBM), the largest computer firm, has already

a wide network in India and is also licensed to assemble the equipment here. Honeywell, IBM's competitor, has sought to enter the Indian market by making a "gift" of ten computers to the Government of India.

The high-pressure sales campaign of the international computer companies, keen on "developing" the market for computers in India and to secure a dominant foothold here, has certainly lured big bosses in the State sector. The LIC's decision on computerisation has been followed up by the various zonal railway systems. The Railways have decided not only to computerise their accounting work but have plans to invest heavily in job-displacing technology and be as "modern" as they can be. Dieselisation of traffic operations has already created problems of finding a market for low-grade coals, besides displacing several jobs in the process of transition from steam traction. The impetus for dieselisation was, of course, provided by external sources—the friendly advice and credits from the World Bank which had to find a market for its clients who make diesel locos and profits for the international oil cartels who would thrive at the expense of the Indian coalmining industry.

Therefore, trade unions do have the suspicion that automation and technological progress in India is actually being tailored to build a big market for the manufactures of high-technology hardware—computers and such other items. The terms under which the IBM is allowed to operate in India (it is claimed that computers can be obtained without involving foreign exchange), the acceptance of a gift

PLEASE NOTE

The second article by Firishita on Moscow to Pindi will appear in Mainstream next week. It has been held over for unavoidable reasons.

—Editor

of 10 costly machines from Honeywell,—and not to be outdone, the collaboration the ICT has made with BEL—make it obvious that the giant computer monopolies have come with a sufficiently long rope to teach us “technology”.

Biggest Joke

Of course, there could be highly realistic business considerations involved in the process. Computer engineering has to deal with considerable problems of obsolescence, and newer models soon render the old ones obsolete. It would not be a bad bargain to send the obsolete ones to the “developing” countries and to develop a market in the process. The gifts and non-insistence on hard currency to buy computers cannot mean anything else.

The stock argument to refute the trade union objection to “automation” is that the country will be then grounded to the technological level of the bullock-cartage. In Indian conditions, to put a computer to work in a bank or insurance office just now would be like insisting on building airports to handle jet traffic in every village in India. We can thereby skip one stage in technological advance; in this instance, the need to build approach roads to the villages for trucks to go in. We can, of course, train the village boys to repair jet engines rather than teach them about overhaul of auto engines!

The biggest joke thrown up in the current discussion on automation in India is the claim that the highly efficient LIC management, with its highly sophisticated twin computers, would not displace more than 50 clerks a year for 3 years or some 150 in all, because of automation. This means that the huge capital investment on computers can result in a saving of only 50 jobs a year and for just three years, and even here, the LIC has plans to absorb all the 50 who would be rendered surplus. This could either mean (a) that the LIC Chairman or his technicians have not yet learned how to operate the computer since, otherwise,

the machine could have given a correct forecast of how many jobs it would displace, or (b) that the big bosses are telling unadulterated lies. From the point of view of conserving resources, it would be more prudent to employ 50 clerks a year than to invest in computers if the LIC's estimates are to be accepted. Of course, if the LIC's Board of Management requires a computer to gamble more scientifically on the stock exchange and spot out potential Mundhras, that would, indeed, be a separate question, outside the pale of jobs industrial relation, etc.

Crazy Game

Rebutting the points made by the LIC, the employees' association has pointed out that the work can go on very well without computers as far as insurance business in India is concerned. In the USA, the life insurance industry managed very well without computers till 1954 when they had to handle 780 lakh policies as against 120 lakh policies now handled by the LIC. The computer installed at Bombay and the other one to be installed at Calcutta can handle no more than 20 lakh policies—one-sixth of the total as the work is now organised. Therefore, the LIC has miles to go to become that *BIG* and the crazy game of computerising one-sixth of the business, while leaving five-sixths to be handled manually can be safely abandoned. But then, this *prestige* for the organisation and its political bosses in the Cabinet and the dispute and tension over computers continue to dog industrial relations.

No doubt computers can do a good job in the fields of scientific research, statistics, etc., and also as an adjunct to management development. Trade unions can have no objection if the machines are put to such uses, but as the AITUC has stated, it is not a matter of high priority in India that computers should be installed to issue premium notices or write out bills or statements of accounts in commercial offices. When we have vast manpower, we utilise this greatest asset for economic development to the

fullest extent rather than allow it to rot or take to such measures as would further accentuate unemployment. This is elementary and should be basic to policy formulation, but this will not bring profits for computer firms or for the big monopolies who want to save on labour to boost their super-profits. It is a question of choice as to what will be in the nation's interest: maximum utilisation of manpower resources or maximum profits for the monopolies.

Govt's Turn

The tripartite meeting held on July 18 could not evidently spell out its choice. The respective positions were stated on behalf of employers and workers. The Labour Minister who summed up the discussions hoped that some “guidelines” could be worked out by further tripartite parleys.

The dimensions of the problem are much beyond the tripartite's capacity to discuss and settle. The formulation of a national policy on jobs, to promote employment growth, investment decisions, etc., in the context of a planned economy and connected questions are all issues for high-level policy-making. The Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission has proposed an approach, and it is for the Government to make up its mind on how to go about the job and not mess with it, as has been done so far.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mainstream published on June 8 the article ‘Origin and Rise of Muslim Revivalism’ by Prof. Iqtidar Alam Khan. The article was based on a paper read by the author at the Conference on Obscurantism held in New Delhi in December last, organized jointly by Council for Promotion of Communal Harmony and Sampradayikta Virodhi Samiti. We regret the oversight in acknowledging it.—Editor

Class-Struggles in France

Balance Sheet of May-June

OBSERVER

FRANCE has returned to normal. DeGaulle is back in power with a massive vote and even more massive majority in the National Assembly. The gigantic strike struggle of over 10 million French workers ended with workers winning their demands. The unprecedented strike and the occupation of universities by students came to an end with the promise of university reforms.

West-orientated commentators of our monopolist-controlled press, who had lost their bearings for some time, have now returned to their favourite theories:

The "May Revolution" in France was but a passing midsummer madness.

It was students who started it; the workers came in only for their economic demands, they were not interested in the "revolution".

France had long ceased to be a revolutionary society since 1848; the barricades in 1870 (Paris Commune) were only against a foreign enemy.

France has always voted Right to about 60 to 70 per cent. This has happened again. Now DeGaulle would carry out the university reforms. This, for instance, is the line of argument of Dr Girija K. Mukherjee in the *Times of India* (July 6, 1968).

From the opposite end comes the analysis of the Left radicals and of the ultra-Leftist students of France:

The "revolution" was initiated by the students who began with the occupation of universities in the beginning of May. They fought the police on the barricades waving black and red flags. This inspired the rank and file workers to start strikes and occupation of factories. But the leadership of the Communist Party and of the trade unions (CGT) "betrayed the revolution".

This tune was fully supported by the Peking *People's Daily* (June 7, 1968) with the foulest abuse of the Communist Party of France, of the Mitterand Socialists and, of course, of the Soviet Union.

In our country, the journals of the Naxalbarites as well as that of the CP(M) echoed the analysis.

Whether the mighty class struggles in France during the months of May and June were a revolution-that-never-was or a revolution-betrayed, the fact remains that it was the workers led by the CGT and the Communist Party of France who bore the

main brunt of the struggle of the democratic forces against the Gaullist reaction and against the monopolies.

To get at the objective reality, one, therefore, cannot do without also the evaluation of the developments by the Communists of France and its allies. Let us put the record straight in terms of the facts and estimations of the Communist Party of France available to us upto this time.

Let us begin with the statement of the Politburo of the Communist Party of France issued after its meeting to assess the results of the second round of polling on June 30. The Politburo stated that "the period just ended was characterised by two features: The great strike of the united working class of France which resulted in wresting of their most important demands and the manoeuvres of the Gaullist power to draw the working people into a violent confrontation which would have given the ruling circles the opportunity to drown the working class movement in blood. Thanks to the farsighted and courageous policies of the Communist Party of France, this plan, which was greatly facilitated by the pseudo-revolutionary group, was foiled.

"DeGaulle, however, fully utilised the atmosphere of violence and terror instigated by his police and by 'Citizens' Action Committee' groups, to swing the votes of numerous Frenchmen and women. The second polling has confirmed and partially strengthened the shift to the Right which became visible on June 23 (first poll day)."

The Politburo underlined the task of defending the successes won and the democratic liberties which are now threatened by forging the unity in action of all the working people and the broad masses of the people.

The Politburo expressed the determination of the Communists to reach an understanding with all the forces of the Left, to work for the acceptance of progressive common programme, which would be such as to win the support of the majority of the people of France and which will open for them the perspective of renovation.

On the same day (July 2), Waldeck Rochet, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of France, had said in a press interview that "the Left Parties continue to occupy an important place in the life of the country and the Communist Party

remains the great force of opposition against the regime of personal power. He pointed out that the Government coalition does not enjoy the support of the majority of the population despite the fact that it has wrested an overwhelming majority in the National Assembly. If a system of proportional representation had obtained, the Communist Party which won 4.5 million votes would have got 94 seats and not 34 as at present. The electoral victory which the Gaullists have secured no doubt gives them a push forward but we think it would not be for long."

Situation Summed Up

L'Humanite, the organ of the Communist Party of France, had summed up the situation thus:

"As things have shaped out at present, it is the coalition of money, hate and terror which has been able to win for the time being. However, the outcome of the election will decide nothing. The contradictions with which the head of the State was confronted by the working class and the universities have not been whisked away by the polling. The economic situation remains, so do the 500,000 unemployed and the university reforms.

"The French working class which has won one of its greatest victories in history through a great strike struggle, will hit back determinedly against new attacks."

The CGT, the major trade union organisation of the French working class, in which both the Communists and Socialists work, emphasised the same point in its appeal to workers issued on July 4:

"The employers and the employers' association are very much pleased with the election results and with the decision of the Gaullist Cabinet about the price-rise and they will not fail to utilise this favourable situation to put in jeopardy the successes we have wrung from them."

The CGT has called upon the workers to maintain and further consolidate their unity of action for the following tasks and demands: to stand on guard over the gains of the strike, to fight for the maintenance of the purchasing power of their pay packet, to keep their jobs; to demand jobs for the 500,000 unemployed; to struggle for the annulment of the ordinance imposing cuts on social security benefits; to fight for a democratic university reform, for a reform of the tax structure and the protection of their trade union rights in the factories.

These statements and estimations bring out very clearly that beneath the calm which has descended on post-election France, there lies a situation of a sharp confrontation between two class fronts: the Front of the Gaullist reaction and the monopolists; and the Front of the working class, the democratic forces. The former with its morale boosted by parliamentary victory is talking of implementing reforms but is actually proceeding to take such financial, fiscal and other counter-measures to retrieve what it has been forced to concede. As a regime of personal power, serving the interest of the monopolies, it has run its course and can offer no solution to the problems of France, of its resurgent working people and youth; what it could not do during the

last ten years it cannot do now. It is allying with the most rabid reactionaries it once opposed in order to bolster up its anti-democratic regime and taking measures to further tighten the grip of the monopolies on the life of France. This will only sow the seeds of another round of struggles, following upon the first which nearly overwhelmed it.

The other front which has apparently received a set-back and defeat has nevertheless preserved in tact its core of united and embattled working class led by the CGT and the CP of France. The massive unity of action of the working class and the broad democratic forces forged in the great days of May and June was sufficient to wrest the demands of the working class and to ward off the attack against the students; but it was not sufficient to pass on from the occupation of factories and the universities to the setting up of Government of the forces of Democratic Unity, which alone could end the regime of personal power, smash the grip of the monopolies and open the path of France's renovation—the path to socialism.

This confrontation is reflected in two developments which took place soon after the second round of polling. The first development was that the Gaullist Cabinet placed on the agenda paper of the first session of the newly-elected National Assembly called to meet from July 11 to 26, two significant items: one was the ratification of the ordinance imposing a cut in the social insurance benefits of the workers, and the second was the ratification of the ordinance granting amnesty to the conspirators of the reactionary terrorist organisation. It was also known that the Cabinet had decided to introduce new taxes though no details were known. Thus the Gaullist regime instead of going forward to implement the promised reforms was hastening to take financial and fiscal measures to nullify the strike gains of the workers and employees and was gang-ing up with the worst reactionaries to steer an anti-democratic course.

Second Development

The second development was the massive funeral attended by 60,000 in Arras of an eighteen-year old young Communist, Mare Lanvin who was shot dead in cold blood by a Gaullist "Citizens Action Committee" volunteer on the eve of the second round of polling. It was a socialist constituency where Socialists and Communists were working together and *Lanvin* was sticking posters when he was shot dead at close range. Guy Mollet said about this murder: "I have never in my life seen a political opponent being thus shot down in cold blood...It was an unprecedented crime." *L'Humanite* commented: "The revolver of the murderer was loaded not only in Arras, it was so in all these speeches of hate and of incitement to civil war which the powers-that-be have been pouring out for weeks. Mare Lanvin was murdered just because he embodied that which the present rulers detest, which make them shake and which they want to destroy." (July 1).

The funeral of the first victim of the fascist murder gangs of DeGaulle became a mighty demonstration of working class and democratic unity which

lasted for 3½ hours and its spirit was summed up in the speech of the Secretary of the Communist Party of France, Marcel Roger: "His death enjoins upon us to forge even closer unity of the Left Parties."

It was not only a confrontation of two class-alliances but also two class-strategies.

The strategy of DeGaulle representing the monopoly capitalists of France and the most reactionary forces, when faced with an unprecedented united action of the working class and the democratic forces, was to utilise the weaknesses in their unity to isolate the Communists, to launch a vicious and unscrupulous anti-Communist campaign coupled with terrorist attacks by armed fascist gangs (OAS) on Communists, to draw the militant vanguard into a violent clash and create conditions to clamp a military dictatorship.

The Strategy

The strategy of the united front of the working class and democratic forces in action, and particularly of its leadership that is, the CP of France and of the CGT was on the other hand, based on a sober and responsible analysis of the class forces involved in the confrontation on both sides. The strategy was to persistently work to raise the unity in action achieved in the fight for the urgent demands of the workers and students, for the defence of democratic rights and liberties and against repression, to the level of a political and programmatic unity capable of moving the broad masses into united action for achieving revolutionary structural changes for ending the regime of the Gaullists and the rule of the monopolies and replacing it by a Government of democratic unity. Meanwhile, the strategy was to avoid being drawn into a premature violent clash for which the Gaullists were itching and to foil their game.

It is the second strategy which came up for sharp criticism and attack not only from the Anarchist, Trotskyist and Maoist leadership of the students and from the Left radicals of the PSU of Mendes France, who roundly condemned it as "the betrayal of the revolution". In India a wellknown Left-wing daily suggested at the end of May that it was the students who initiated the struggle for their demands. This forced the rank and file workers to follow suit while their TU leadership and the CP of France lagged behind; and when they did take over the leadership, they did so to convert a political upheaval into an ordinary economic struggle. It would therefore, be worth while to examine briefly the events of the great May-June struggle and positions taken and lead given by the CGT and the leadership of the CP of France during the same period from their own records.

It is, of course, a fact that the students began the struggle for their demands at the end of April in Nanterre. Police attacked the students, hundreds were arrested and numerous injured. After the University Department at Nanterre was closed, the scene shifted to Sorbonne which the students occupied. Again the police attacked the students, and cleared Sorbonne. This was on May 4. The CGT and the CP France from the beginning supported

the students' struggle and demands while disagreeing with their tactics. On May 10, new clashes between students and police occurred in which 367 students were wounded and 468 were arrested.

It was against this continued and brutal repression upon the students of Paris fighting for their just and democratic demands that the principal central trade union organisations of France, the CGT, CFDT and the Force Ouvrière on May 12, gave a call for a countrywide general strike of all the workers to protest against the repression on students and in support of their demands. The Politburo of the CP of France on the same day supported the strike call and demanded a special session of the Parliament on the question. The strike was called for May 13 and on the same day joint demonstration of students and workers was also called by the working class leadership.

So it was not a question of students' struggle unleashing workers' struggles but on the other hand, the working class led by the CGT and the CP of France coming out with a massive general strike and demonstration call in support of students' struggle and transforming the whole situation.

Ten million workers and employees of Paris and elsewhere responded to the call. Everything came to a standstill. The four lakh strong worker-student joint demonstration was the greatest in ten years according to the Communist Party of France. The first result of this massive action was that the arrested students were released and Sorbonne reopened. The Red Flag flew over Sorbonne. The massive strike and demonstration paralysed police repression.

The Unprecedented Feature

How did the 24-hour general strike of May 13 lead to the indefinite general strike beginning from May 19? Was it over the head of the leadership? The unprecedented success of the May 13 strike no doubt gave a push to spontaneous action to occupation of factories and continuation of strike. But it was the initiative to unite the leading political and TU organisations in action for workers' demands that really brought it about. On May 13 itself, the Politburo of the CP of France called for democratic unity to solve the problems of students as well as workers. The next day there was a joint statement by the CP of France and Left Federation putting forward workers' demands' and on the day following the CGT called for a continuation of the fight. The result was that on May 16, workers of the Renault factories which are a stronghold of the CP of France and of the CGT began occupying the factories. Aircraft workers did the same and on May 18 60,000 workers of Renault factories occupied their six units.

On May 18, Politburo of the CP of France called for an agreement between the Left Parties and the trade unions to chalk out a proper social programme for the movement. On May 19, already seven million workers were on strike and occupying factories. Thus the CGT and the CP of France correctly sensing the mood of the workers after May 13 took the initiative both in call and action to

launch an indefinite strike and occupation of factories.

The general features of the indefinite general strike of the workers and employees of all industries and services, of all students, teachers and artists, which developed from May 19 and which went on swelling and strengthening until it reached ten million mark, are well known.

The unprecedented feature of the strike was, while all production wheels had come to a dead stop, while all transport on street and rails was off, while all factories were occupied—their gates guarded by strike-posts and machines protected with care—the central strike committee organised the smooth running of all essential services and supplies of food-stuff. So in spite of total stoppage of work and transport, life was normal.

Leadership Of The Strikers

Another surprising feature of the strike was that all newspapers without exception reported the strike activities objectively and sympathetically. Had the monopoly press changed its spots? No. It was workers' order. Papers were allowed to come out only on condition of objective reporting. Once *Figaro*, the well-known big bourgeois paper, violated the order and the issue could not come out till the offending text was removed and *Figaro* agreed not to repeat the mistake!

In view of the absolute Trade Union unity, the managements of the State enterprises, of the banks, of insurance companies and of almost all big companies and of the overwhelming majority of the strike-bound factories were forced to take the decision to pay advances to workers. The money was distributed by strike committees and it came to 400-500 Francs per striker. Where the employers were unwilling to pay the advance to workers, the local bodies and municipalities took the decision to place the State funds at the disposal of the strikers.

Besides, peasants and fishermen sent huge donations in kind, like potatoes, fish, fruit and vegetable to the central strike committee.

In the Popular Front days of 1936, the general strike involved four-and-half million workers and employees and the factories and workshops were occupied for three-and-half weeks. The present struggle surpassed these targets.

Speaking on the non-confidence motion in the Parliament on May 21, Waldeck Rochet, General-Secretary of the CP of France said: "The movement that has broken out is directed against the government itself." The motion was lost, getting 233 votes, while 244 were necessary for the motion to get passed. Later, the Communist Party pointed out that the 233 votes for the motion represented 12 million electors while the votes against the motion represented only 10 million electors. On May 22, the Politburo of the CP of France demanded: "The Government should resign and allow a Government of alliance of all Left forces be formed". On May 24, M. Mitterand, the leader of the Leftist Federation demanded "the resignation of M. Pompidou and called upon

DeGaulle to accept the demand for the welfare of the citizens."

A big political upheaval was on the way. It was shaking the DeGaulle regime to its foundations. The ruling class was losing its bearings. It was not yet using police force against the mighty movement. It was yet making up its mind about its strategy. What about the leadership of the strikers?

As soon as the indefinite strike started, the Politburo of the CP of France in a statement said: "We have to develop a broad movement the aim of which was the end of Gaullist regime and its replacement by a really representative Government with all the Leftist forces". At the same time, on May 25, it called for the formulation of the demands of the workers and employees for their attainment as the immediate objective.

On the next day the CGT formulated the demands of the workers as follows:

1. Annulment of the ordinance of 1968, imposing cut on workers' social security benefits;
2. General rise in wages and pay emoluments;
3. Reduction of hours of work without reduction of wages;
4. Guaranteeing of Trade Union Rights of workers, extension of powers of the workers' councils.

The CGT Secretary declared: "Whatever Government comes it will have to meet these demands of the workers." The CPF General Secretary, giving the background of these demands stated: "The monopolists were earning increased profits in 1967, for instance, Schneider Group (Metal industry) by 53 per cent; Louvre Department Stores by 50 per cent and the list can be multiplied. On the other side, we have four million wage-earners who get less than 600 Francs per month—a starvation wage. The general living standard of the wage earners was stagnant for the last ten years and even declining. The purchasing power of the population was being reduced. While the working week in France was the longest in Europe, unemployment was growing apace, the present figure being 500,000 which includes a hundred thousand youth."

Call For Negotiation

Advanced workers from the metal industry like the Renault Works were forming Action Committees in their respective factories and were passing resolutions calling upon all Leftist parties to come together on the basis of an agreement on a minimum common programme to form a Government of Democratic Unity. At the same time, the great mass of workers were in the strike for fulfilment of their economic demands to begin with. That is why both the CGT and the CP of France not only formulated the economic demands but called upon the employers and the Government to negotiate. The trade unions of the respective industries were ready to negotiate.

To back both the immediate objective and the general aim of the great movement, its leaders called another big demonstration in Paris and throughout France which took place on May 24.

(Continued on Page 33)

Public Money for Private Gains

H. D. MALAVIYA

THE Industrial Finance Corporation (IFC), the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI) and the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) are the three Government-owned and/or Government-sponsored specialised institutions in India today working in the capital market. They are required to play a distinct role in long-term financing of industry and trade in various directions.

The object as conceived when the creation of these institutions was under active consideration was to help the small entrepreneur to set up new units through loan advances and other facilities. The expansion, modernisation, renovation, etc., of existing units were also viewed as falling within the orbit of the functions of these financial institutions; but these were, by and large, secondary to the primary purpose of helping small entrepreneurs to set up new industries.

During the first five years of this decade, from 1961-62 to 1965-66, the IFC, the ICICI and the IDBI extended financial assistance of the order of Rs 22,788 lakhs. Everyone would agree, this is quite a lot of Indian taxpayers' money, and it would be important to know how it was disbursed.

Assistance rendered by the three institutions consists of (a) grant of long-term loans and advances and subscription to debentures; (b) guarantee for the repayment of the loans

within 25 years; (c) guarantee for the capital goods purchased within the country and from abroad; (d) underwriting of shares and debentures; and (e) subscription of equity and preference shares.

For the purposes of our enquiry it would be useful to examine the funds which have gone from the three institutions to the business groups and analyse the trends in direct loans advanced; the total value of shares (both ordinary and preference) underwritten by them in respect of companies belonging to various business groups; and the total value of debentures underwritten by them in respect of companies belonging to different business groups.

Industrial Finance Corporation

The Research and Statistics Division of the Department of Company Affairs of the Government of India has made a study on the subject basing itself on data supplied by the three financial institutions. The period of the study is from 1961-62 to 1965-66. The study takes the Report of the Monopolies Inquiry Commission as the basis for the grouping of the companies. Companies which do not belong to any of the 75 business groups as shown in the Monopolies Commission Report have been treated as "others" for the study.

During the five years 1961-62 and 1965-66, the Industrial Finance Corporation (IFC)

advanced loans totalling Rs 10405.8 lakhs. The total value of shares (both ordinary and preference) underwritten by the IFC during the five year period stood at Rs 1412.4 lakhs. Table I gives the break-up of financial assistance sanctioned by the IFC during the period under study.

The Beneficiaries

It would be seen from Table I that during the five years under review, out of a total loan of Rs 10405.8 lakhs advanced by the IFC, Rs 2209.3 lakhs was sanctioned to only 25 business groups constituting about 21.2 per cent of the total financial assistance in the form of direct loans to all companies in the corporate sector.

Mafatlals got the maximum amount, Rs 250 lakhs, that is, 2.4 per cent of the loans given by IFC during the five years. This was followed by ACC and Birla groups, 1.9 per cent and 1.6 per cent, respectively.

The same story of the IFC pampering the monopolists is repeated in the total value of shares (ordinary and preferential) underwritten by the IFC during the five years. Underwritten shares of the value of Rs 239 lakhs covered nine business groups constituting 16.9 per cent of the value of shares underwritten by the IFC, amounting to a total of Rs 1412.4 lakhs. The Birlas again have the top favour of the IFC in share underwriting. Shares of the Birlas underwritten

by the IFC amount to Rs 84.0 lakhs or 5.9 per cent of the value of total shares underwritten.

Mafatlal is a hot favourite. Value of Mafatlal shares underwritten by IFC amount to Rs 40 lakhs or 2.8 per cent of the total. It is not for nothing that Mafatlal, not considered big enough to be listed in the top ten of the 75 prepared by the Monopolies Enquiry Commission, should in 1967 jump to number four among top ten business houses of India, as we shall see later.

The total value of debentures underwritten by the IFC amounts to Rs 425.0 lakhs. The ACC and the Birlas again are the top favourites of the IFC in the matter of underwriting of debenture issues. Out of only four houses whose debenture issues were underwritten by the IFC, the ACC accounted for Rs 110.0 lakhs or 16.4 per cent and the Birlas for Rs 65 lakhs or 9.7 per cent of the total, both together cornering Rs 175 lakhs out of the value of debenture issues underwritten by the IFC for business houses (as distinct from those under the head "others") amounting to Rs 245 lakhs (or 36.6 per cent of the total value of debentures underwritten).

The IFC issued guarantees totalling Rs 1111.2 lakhs. Among the 75, six were its beneficiaries and the value of the guarantees stood at Rs 350.1 lakhs or 31.5 per cent of the total. While the Birlas do not seem to have cared about it, Bangur and Bajaj come up in the picture only to be eclipsed by Modi who alone received 10 per cent (Rs 111.2 lakhs) of the total guarantees issues by the IFC.

The study of the Department of Company Affairs (Research and Statistics) has given the break-up of the IFC loans and other advances for the years 1961-62, 1962-63, 1963-64, 1964-65 and 1965-66. The 'patriotic' Bajaj comes in for favour three times in 1962-63, 1963-64 and 1965-66. Bangur also receives favour three times, 1962-63, 1964-65 and 1965-66. The Tatas come only once 1964-65; so also Mafatlal (1965-66). The Birlas

TABLE I
Financial Assistance Sanctioned by the Industrial Finance Corporation of India

(1961-62—1965-66)

(Rs. in lakhs)

Business group	Direct loan	Underwriting		Guarantee	Total of 2, 3 & 4	Percentage of Col. 6 of the grand total
		Shares	Debentures			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. A. F. Harvey	15.0 (0.1)	—	—	—	15.0	0.1
2. A.C.C.	200.0 (1.9)	—	110.0 (16.4)	—	310.0	2.5
3. Anim	100.0 (1.0)	—	—	—	100.00	0.8
4. B.I.C	17.1 (0.1)	—	—	—	17.1	0.1
5. Bajaj	155.3 (1.5)	—	—	44.6 (4.0)	155.3	1.2
6. Bangur	—	10.0 (0.7)	60.0 (9.0)	80.0 (7.2)	70.0	0.6
7. Birla	162.5 (1.6)	84.0 (5.9)	65.0 (9.7)	—	311.5	2.5
8. J. K. (Singhanian)	70.0 (0.6)	—	—	1.0 (0.1)	70.0	0.6
9. Kamani	47.3 (0.4)	—	—	—	17.3	0.4
10. Kanoria (Bhagirath)	—	5.0 (0.4)	—	—	5.0	—
11. Kanoria R. K.	85.9 (0.8)	5.0 (0.4)	—	—	90.9	0.7
12. Killick	—	—	10.0 (1.5)	—	10.0	0.1
13. Kirloskar	59.9 (0.6)	—	—	—	59.9	0.5
14. Mafatlal	250.0 (2.4)	40.0 (2.8)	—	—	290.9	2.3
15. Mahindra & Mahindra	25.0 (0.2)	—	—	—	25.0	0.2
16. Modi	148.0 (1.4)	—	—	111.2 (10.0)	148.0	1.2
17. Naidu (Venkateswamy)	—	20.0 (1.4)	—	—	20.0	0.2
18. Naidu (Ranga-swamy)	100.0 (1.0)	—	—	—	100.0	0.8

TABLE I (Contd.)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Parry	62.3 (0.6)	300 (2.1)	—	—	92.3	0.7
20. Seshasayee	81.0 (0.8)	—	—	—	81.0	0.7
21. Suri Ram	60.0 (0.6)	5.0 (0.4)	—	—	65.0	0.5
22. Shriyans Jain	65.0 (0.6)	—	—	—	65.0	0.5
23. S. Nagarmull	150.0 (1.5)	—	—	—	150.0	1.2
24. Tata	125.0 (1.4)	40.0 (2.8)	—	—	165.0	1.3
25. Thapar	50.0 (0.4)	—	—	—	50.0	0.4
26. Thiagaraja	25.0 (0.2)	—	—	17.6 (1.6)	25.0	0.2
27. V. Rama-krishnan	80.0 (0.8)	—	—	95.7 (8.6)	80.0	0.7
28. Walchand	75.0 (0.7)	—	—	—	75.0	0.6
Total:	2209.3 (21.2)	239.0 (16.9)	245.0 (36.6)	350.1 (31.5)	2693.3	21.6
Others:	8196.5 (78.8)	1173.4 (83.1)	425.0 (63.4)	761.1 (68.5)	9749.9	78.4
Grand Total:	10405.8 (100.0)	1412.4 (100.0)	67.0 (100.0)	1111.2 (100.0)	12488.2	100.0

Note: 1. Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to the grand total in each column.

2. "Others" means loans and other financial assistance sanctioned to companies not belonging to any of the 75 business groups mentioned in the Monopolies Enquiry Commission Report.

3. Shares denote both preference and ordinary.

enter only in 1963-64, never to be disfavoured again all through 1964-65 and 1965-66.

ICICI

Now let us have a look at the financial assistance rendered by ICICI during the five-year period 1961-62 to 1965-66. Table II gives the break-up for the period under study.

The Beneficiaries

It will be seen that the ICICI advanced direct loans totalling Rs 2161.7 lakhs. Of this, Rs 787.9 lakhs, or 36.4 per cent of the total went to only 18 of the

Big Business houses among the 75, while the innumerable smaller men under the heading "others" had to share among themselves the remaining Rs 1373.8 lakhs or 63.6 per cent of the total.

Among these 18 big business beneficiaries of the ICICI, Mafatlal received Rs 140.0 lakhs or 6.5 per cent of the total loan advanced, the ACC Rs 100 lakhs or 4.6 per cent, and the Birlas Rs 101.4 lakhs or 4.7 per cent. The ACC and the Birlas thus together got Rs 201.4 lakhs of the direct loans of the ICICI, that is, 9.3 per cent.

Out of the total value of

shares underwritten by ICICI amounting to Rs 764 lakhs, Rs 180 lakhs or 23.5 per cent of the total was in respect of shares in seven business groups, namely, Bangur, R.K. Kanoria, Kirloskar Mafatlal, G.V. Naidu, Wadia and the Tatas. Even out of these seven, while Naidu had to be satisfied with only Rs 5 lakhs shares worth of underwriting, the Tatas had Rs 45 lakhs, or 5.9 per cent, underwritten and Mafatlal Rs 40 lakhs or 5.2 per cent.

In underwriting of debenture issues, the ICICI beats its own record of favouring Big Business. The total value of debenture issues underwritten by the ICICI during the five-year period stands at Rs 755 lakhs. Out of this the amount under "others" stands at Rs 350.0 lakhs or 46.4 per cent of the total. As much as Rs 405 crores or 53.6 per cent of the total was underwritten in the form of debenture issues in respect of eight business groups only. The beneficiaries were A.F. Harvey, ACC, Andrew Yule, Bangur, Binny, Killick, the Tatas and Thapar. The debenture issue underwritten in respect of the Tatas accounted for Rs 120 lakhs or 15.9 per cent of the total; in respect of ACC the figure was Rs 90 lakhs or 12 per cent of the total.

No wonder the ICICI has won plaudits from Big Business in India for its solicitude for development of industries in the private sector. It has not only provided loans but also risk capital through direct participation in share capital and underwriting of capital issues.

Industrial Development Bank of India

The IDBI was established on July 1, 1964, and so it could not sufficiently reveal its solicitude for Indian monopolists. But even in the short span of two years it successfully established its reputation as a friend of the Big Business, particularly of the lucky and meteoric Mafatlal.

At its inception, the conduct of financial operations by the IDBI was directed to consist of (a) granting of direct loans; (b) subscribing to purchasing or

underwriting of shares and debentures; and (c) guaranteeing deferred payment due from industrial concerns to third parties and loans raised by them in the capital market or from financial institutions. Table III gives the break-up of financial assistance sanctioned by the IDBI in the two years 1964-65 and 1965-66.

The Beneficiaries

It would be seen that out of the direct loans advanced by the IDBI totalling Rs 5180.4 lakhs, as much as Rs 1844.6 lakhs or 35.6 per cent of the total went to only six business houses, namely, ACC, Birla, Kamani, Mafatlal, Parry and Ruia. 'Others', the innumerable, got Rs 3335.8 lakhs or 64.4 per cent of the total. ACC got Rs 500 lakhs (9.7 per cent), Birlas Rs 68.3 lakhs (1.3 per cent) and Parry Rs 161.3 lakhs (3.1 per cent). The vigorous Mafatlals cornered Rs 1040 lakhs of direct IDBI loans, that is, 20 per cent of the total loans advanced.

Indeed, Mafatlal's windfall thanks to the generous IDBI would almost make one believe that the IDBI was created with the specific purpose of helping Mafatlal. Thus, in the matter of share underwriting, out of the total value of shares underwritten by the IDBI during the two year period totalling Rs 1308.5 lakhs the value of Mafatlal shares underwritten stood at Rs 307.6 lakhs, or 23.5 per cent of the total. But one must be fair to Mafatlal. He bagged the entire underwriting only in one year, 1965-66, and not in two years. Parry's shares underwritten amounted to Rs 76.0 (5.8 per cent) and the Birla's to Rs 78 lakhs (6.0 per cent).

In debenture underwriting, the IDBI has no spectacular record to show. It underwrote debenture issues worth Rs 60 lakhs (46.1 per cent of the total debenture issues underwritten by the IDBI amounting to Rs 130 lakhs only) of Bangur and of Rs 40 lakhs (30.8 per cent) of the Birlas.

Glory to Mafatlal again in the matter of guarantees issued by the IDBI for deferred payment. Total guarantees issued by the IDBI amounting to Rs 2033.7 lakhs. Of this, "others" shared

TABLE II

(Rs. in lakhs)

Business group	Direct loan	Underwriting		Guarantee	Total of 2, 3 & 4	Percentage of Col. 6 to the grand total
		Shares	Debentures			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. A.F. Harvey	—	—	50.0 (6.6)	—	50.0	1.4
2. A.C.C.	100.0 (4.6)	—	90.0 (12.0)	—	190.0	5.2
3. Andrew Yule	20.0 (0.9)	—	(50.0) (6.6)	—	70.0	1.9
4. Bajaj	10.0 (0.4)	—	—	—	10.0	0.2
5. Bangur	—	10.0 (1.3)	10.0 (1.3)	—	20.0	0.5
6. Binny	—	—	10.0 (1.3)	—	10.0	0.2
7. Birla	101.4 (4.7)	—	—	—	101.4	2.8
8. Dalmia (Jaydayal)	23.0 (1.1)	—	—	—	23.0	0.6
9. Jardine & Henderson	3.5 (0.2)	—	—	—	3.5	0.1
10. Kanoria R. K.	—	20.0 (2.6)	—	—	20.0	0.5
11. Kastur bhai Lalbhai	60.0 (2.7)	—	—	—	60.0	1.6
12. Killick	6.0 (0.3)	—	25.0 (3.3)	—	31.0	0.9
13. Kirloskar	29.0 (1.3)	35.0 (4.6)	—	—	64.0	1.8
14. Kothari	25.0 (1.2)	—	—	—	25.0	0.7
15. Mafatlal	140.0 (6.5)	40.0 (5.2)	—	—	180.0	4.9
16. Mahindra & Mahindra	50.0 (2.3)	—	—	—	50.0	1.4
17. Naidu (G. Venkata-swamy)	15.0 (0.7)	5.0 (0.6)	—	—	20.0	0.5
18. Nowrosjee Wadia	—	25.0 (3.3)	—	—	25.0	0.7
19. Parry	22.5 (1.1)	—	—	—	22.5	0.6
20. Sarabhai	40.0 (1.8)	—	—	—	40.0	1.1

TABLE II (Contd.)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. Shapoorji Pallonji	20.0 (0.9)	—	—	—	20.0	0.5
22. Shri Ram	72.5 (3.3)	—	—	—	72.5	2.0
23. Tata	50.0 (2.4)	45.0 (5.9)	—	120.0 (15.9)	215.0	5.8
24. Thapar	—	—	—	50.0 (6.6)	50.0	1.4
Total:	787.9 (36.4)	180.0 (23.5)	405.0 (53.6)	—	1372.9	37.3
Others:	1373.8 (63.6)	584.0 (76.5)	350.0 (46.4)	151.6	2307.8	62.7
Grand Total:	2161.7	764.0	755.0	151.6	3680.7	100.0

Note: 1. Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to the grand total in each column.

2. "Others" means loan and other financial assistance sanctioned to companies not belonging to any business group as shown in the MIC report.

3. Shares denote both ordinary and preference.

TABLE III

(Rs in lakhs)

Business group	Direct loan	Underwriting		Guaran- tee	Percentage of 2,3 and 4	Percentage to the grand total
1	2	Shares	Deben- tures	5	6	7
1. A.C.C.	500.0 (9.7)	—	—	—	500.0	7.6
2. Bangur	—	25.0 (1.9)	60.0 (46.1)	—	85.0	1.3
3. Birla	68.3 (1.3)	78.0 (6.0)	40.0 (30.8)	—	186.3	2.3
4. Kamani	30.0 (0.6)	—	—	—	30.0	0.5
5. Mafatlal	1040.0	307.6 (23.5)	—	732.1 (36.0)	1347.6	20.4
6. Mahindra & Mahindra	(20.0)	10.0 (0.8)	—	—	10.0	0.1
7. Parry	161.3 (1.3)	76.0 (5.8)	—	401.4 (17.7)	273.3	3.6
8. Ruia	45.0 (0.9)	—	—	—	45.0	0.7
9. Tata	—	12.0 (0.9)	—	—	12.0	0.1
Total :	1844.6 (35.6)	508.6 (38.9)	100.0 (76.9)	1135.5 (55.7)	2453.2	37.1
Others	3335.8 (64.4)	799.9 (61.1)	33.0 (23.1)	900.2 (44.3)	4165.7	62.9
Grand Total:	5180.4 (100)	1308.5 (100)	130.0 (100)	2033.7 (100)	6618.9	100.0

less than half, a bare Rs 900.2 lakhs or 44.3 per cent of the total. The remaining Rs 1133.5 lakhs (or 55.7 per cent) was shared only by two lucky ones—Mafatlal again in whose case guarantees issued stood at Rs 732.1 lakhs, or 36.6 per cent of the total; and Parry with Rs 401.4 lakhs guaranteed, making 19.7 per cent of the total guarantee issues.

State Power Stimulates Concentration

With the growing concentration of production and capital, there is now a very clear trend in India towards a few big houses, monopolies, covering entire industries at the cost of the small entrepreneurs now come into being in India thanks to the Industrial Estates and otherwise.

Equally clearly emerging is the reality that an ever more important factor stimulating concentration is the support of the State power in India revealed in organisational assistance, preferential treatment, loans and guarantees. *State and private capitals tend to intertwine, with the private sector giving the State as little as it can.*

We shall try to make ourselves clearer. The illustration on the next page gives the assets in crores of rupees of top ten business houses in India as calculated by the *Economic Times* Research Bureau for the year 1966-1967.

It would be seen that from a modest fourteenth position among the Big Business houses at the time of the count by the Monopolies Inquiry Commission, Mafatlal has dramatically leapt to the fourth position. From about Rs 40 crores in 1963-64, the assets of Mafatlal crossed the Rs 100 crore mark. The Mafatlal assets grew 2.7 fold during the three-year period after 1963-64. With the National Organic and Polyolefins fast coming up, Mafatlal will in all probability continue to maintain the high growth rate.

Though not in the top ten, the two other growing houses are Bajaj and Kirloskar, both beneficiaries of GOI's industrial financing institutions.

The above study reveals that among the top ten business

groups as per the listing of Monopolies Inquiry Commission, the Birlas and ACC received 2.5 per cent each of the total financial assistance sanctioned by IFC during 1961-62 to 1965-66.

The Tatas' listed as Number One in the Monopolies Commission Report, received only 1.3 per cent of the assistance sanctioned by IFC; it received the maximum financial assistance, about 5.8 per cent, of the total financial assistance sanctioned by the ICICI. ACC and the Birlas received 5.2 per cent and 2.8 per cent, respectively, of the total financial assistance sanctioned by the ICICI during 1961-62 and 1965-66.

Among the top ten, Bangur too has received considerable assistance from the IFC, ICICI and also the IDBI. Thapar, Walchand and Sri Ram also come in the picture, but not particularly notably.

Of the three financial institutions under study, the IDBI, even during two years of its existence, has revealed itself as the most brazen among them, supremely unaware of the Directives of the Indian Constitution as regards concentration of economic power. It had no compunction in aiding ACC, the Birlas and Parry to the tune of

Rs 729.6 lakhs in direct loans alone, leaving aside the generosity shown in matters of share and debenture underwriting and in guarantee issues for these very groups.

Most curious is the case of Mafatlal. Thereby may hang a tale, how becoming or otherwise one cannot say; and for all we know, more of it may be heard in days to come, and some one may be called upon to explain. In 1965-66 alone, the pre-Election year, it benefited from the IDBI in loans, share underwriting and guarantee issues to the tune of Rs 1347.6 lakhs, being 20.4 per cent of the total financial assistance rendered by the IDBI during 1964-65 and 1965-66. Mafatlal also received 2.3 per cent and 4.9 per cent of the total financial assistance sanctioned by the IFC and ICICI, respectively.

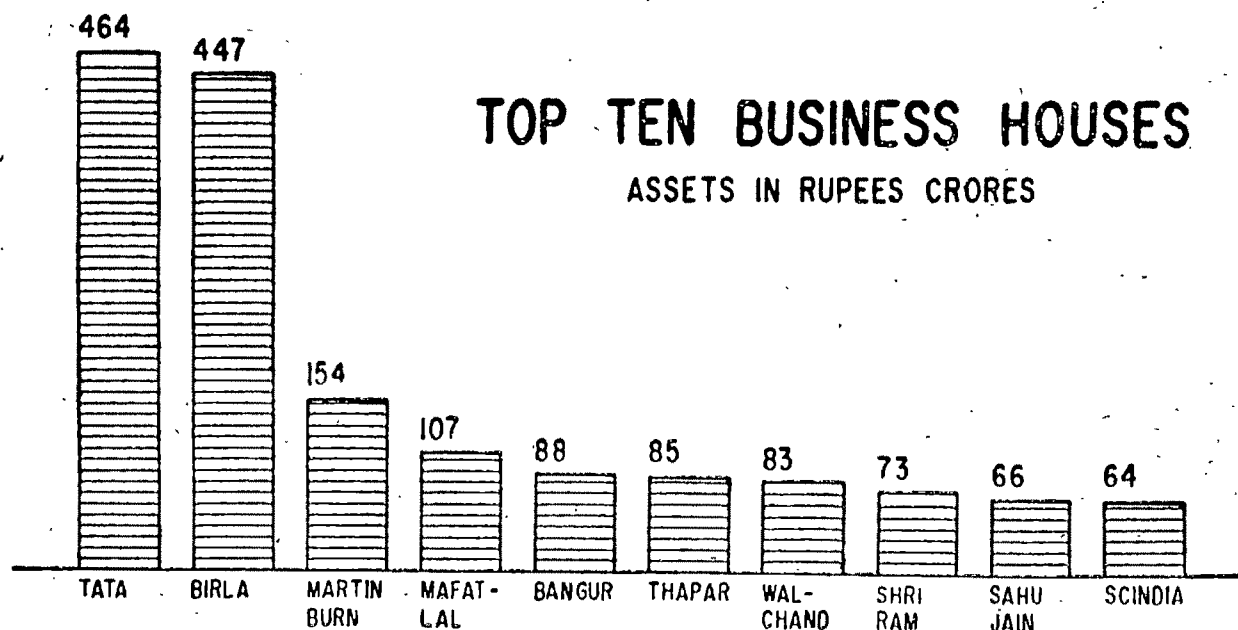
Mafatlal's 'National Organic Chemical Industries Ltd.' has been the magic bird which seems to have attracted all the money. This company received a direct loan of Rs 200 lakhs from IFC, Rs 110 lakhs from ICICI, and Rs 750 lakhs from the IDBI for expansion of some of the projects undertaken by it. The IFC and the IDBI also underwrote Rs 40 lakhs and Rs 270 lakhs, respectively, in the form of shares

issued, by the 'National Organic Chemical Industries Ltd.'

Our country started on a supposedly charted course for the attainment of better life for our long-suffering millions. On the way, somewhere 'pragmatism' became the credo, and, following from it, the call to increase production, because the argument went, there is no 'use dividing poverty'. The financial institutions were created with a view to help increase our production.

What has been the result? Per capita gross National product of India during 1967 was lower than the figures for Algeria, Ghana, Iran, the United Arab Republic and Nigeria according to statistics compiled by the Overseas Institute of Canada. The figure (in US dollars) are: Algeria and Ghana 230, Iran 210, Nigeria 100, India 90, and Indonesia 70.

The contribution made by the IFC, ICICI and IDBI to India's gross national product would be clear from the above. Far from the objectives for which they were visualised and designed, they have proved to be instruments of the State to stimulate concentration of production and capital. Mafatlal is their most considerable product.



African Personality

SAYED AMIN MAGZOUB ABDOUN

ERNEST Renan, the great French philosopher is quoted to have written "It is not race, religion, language, state, civilization or economic interests that make a nation". "The national idea" according to him "is founded on a heroic past, great men, true glory. Common experience leads to the formation of a community of will. More than anything else it is *common grief* that binds a nation together. A nation, therefore, is a great solidarity founded on the consciousness of sacrifices made in the past and on willingness to make further ones in future. The existence of a nation resembles a plebiscite repeated every day". Whether this definition of nationhood applies to Africa and her several hundred million Africans the answer is not very negative.

The continent of Africa is inhabited by various national entities, or rather by different nationalities. The Ghanaians, for instance, are different from the Ethiopians in their way of life, their language, their dress and their physical appearance. Historically, too, they might have shared very little. Today, there are forty independent African States, and there are within the continent today different races, different religions, different languages and different civilizations.

Africa resembles in this sense, a great pot inside which all these contrasts and differences are simmering and gradually melting into a new mixture. And the "African Personality" being still in the making, is therefore, difficult to define but easier to locate somewhere inside this great melting pot. However, it is true that inside the melting pot there are common African griefs and there are common African glories.

The first five years of this decade, that is 1960-65 are surely the glorious years for Mother Africa. It is the period during which the majority of the States of Africa acquired their independence, and emerged as full fledged sovereign states.

These glorious years also witnessed the rising of an African *mass* awakening, and a recognition of a place for the African peoples among the international human society.

The fight for freedom started long ago in many parts of Africa. It goes back to the days of the

Boer war in Southern Africa before the beginning of the century, and the Mahdis Revolution for independence of the Sudan in the 1880's—as well as the Ethiopian Liberation movement against the fascist aggression of 1936.

The fight for freedom in countries of North Africa is as ancient as the recorded history itself. The Egyptians who were Africans more than anything else, intermittently fought for their sovereignty since many centuries before the birth of Christ.

Yet the mass African awakening in its modern conception was accelerated, I should say, by the turn of this decade which witnessed the emergence of the "African Personality" in its collective form at home and abroad.

Inter-African state relations have grown considerably and have acquired an intensive urge for mutual equality, friendship and brotherhood, as well as collective and truly African representation in the society of nations abroad.

The emergence of the Organization of African Unity during the same period constituted a turning point in the political history of the Continent. It intensified the breeding up of the African "family" and the development of the feeling among the various African masses that they belong to the same stock, and that they are more than just geographical neighbours.

On the twenty-fifth day of May 1963, and in a highly ceremonial atmosphere, thirty-two African heads of States and Governments gathered in Addis Ababa to sign together the Charter of the Organisation of African Unity. They solemnly declared their adherence to the following principles:

1. The sovereign equality of all member states.
2. Non-interference in the internal affairs of states.
3. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and for its inalienable right to independent existence.
4. Peaceful settlement of disputes, by negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration. (And for this purpose they signed a separate protocol for the establishment of an African Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration).
5. Unreserved condemnation, in all its forms, of political assassination as well as of subversive activities on the part of neighbouring states or any other state.

This contribution constituted the text of the address delivered by the author, who is Ambassador of Sudan in India, in New Delhi on July 16, 1968 under the joint auspices of Indian Council for Africa and India International Centre.

6. Absolute dedication to the total emancipation of the African territories which are still dependent.
7. Affirmation of a policy of non-alignment with regard to all blocs.

While we are dealing with the "African Personality", I think it is relevant to go through the contents of the Preamble of the Charter of the Organisation of African Unity. It was written in one of the solemn and persistent moods of the African Personality. It spoke of freedom, equality, justice, dignity, sovereignty, independence and the aspiration of the African peoples for brotherhood and solidarity. It reads:

"We the Heads of African States and Governments assembled in the city of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia:

CONVINCED that it is the inalienable right of all people to control their own destiny;

CONSCIOUS of the fact that freedom, equality, justice and dignity are essential objectives for the achievement of the legitimate aspirations of the African peoples;

CONSCIOUS of our responsibility to harness the natural and human resources of our continent for the total advancement of our peoples in spheres of human endeavour;

INSPIRED by a common determination to promote understanding among our peoples and cooperation among our States in response to the aspirations of our peoples for brotherhood and solidarity, in a larger unity transcending ethnic and national differences;

CONVINCED that in order to translate this determination into a dynamic force in the cause of human progress, conditions for peace and security must be established and maintained;

DETERMINED to safeguard and consolidate the hard-won independence as well as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our states and to fight against neo-colonialism in all its forms;

DEDICATED to the general progress of Africa;

PERSUADED that the charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to the principles of which we reaffirm our adherence, provide a solid foundation for peaceful and positive cooperation among States;

DESIROUS that all African States should henceforth unite so that the welfare and well-being of their peoples can be assured.

RESOLVED to reinforce the links between our states by establishing and strengthening common institutions;

HAVE agreed to the present Charter....."

The principles of African brotherhood and good neighbourly relations have thus become a popular slogan of the day and in fact many African problems between the African states today are handled one way or another within this concept of good-neighbourly relations. This is more so in the case of problems previously created by foreign influences and outside interference. The problem of the mercenaries in the Congo, for instance, and the dark shadows it created in the relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and some of its

neighbours, were overcome because of the African desire to preserve the good-neighbourly relations in the Continent, and because the problem itself was a foreign-made issue.

This, however, does not prejudice the fact that very little work was ever referred to the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration, which was established a year later than the OAU. Many disputes between African States were not referred to the Commission and were handled away from its premises. This was not because of any resentment to the necessary existence of the Arbitration Commission, but perhaps because the Commission itself needs a rigorous shake-up of its set-up so that it might always take its own initiative to get into the scene whenever disputes arise between member states.

Boundary problems that erupt from time to time between African States are greatly minimised through the application of the valid concept of the necessity to maintain the best of inter-state relations at this era of transformation of the "African Personality".

There are huge boundary problems in Africa. Many of the boundaries of the independent states are not yet officially demarcated or mutually recognized. This is especially true in states of Eastern and Central Africa—previous British colonies and protectorates. For some reason or another, the British failed to establish well-recognised boundary lines in their previous colonies until they left.

In some cases where two British colonies were adjacent, the British Administrators sometimes cut off a whole triangle or a square of border land and handed it over to their counterparts in the adjacent (British) colony. This was often made for administrative conveniences and the boundaries involved became administrative boundaries. Some East-African independent States have today huge portions of their boundaries which are administratively demarcated but disputed either legally or politically.

Foreign powers who once ruled the African continent have committed a big mistake and a grave offence by not securing a lasting settlement of all the boundary obscurities in the colonies they dominated and before the accomplishment of political independence. It is true, that many obstacles were there during the British colonial era. But chances for a final settlement of many boundaries were far better then than now.

The boundary problems, some of them potentially explosive, are but one of many other problems which were either left behind unsolved by the foreign colonizers or actually created by them. I do not intend to dwell on them here, but some of them do have their impact on the "AFRICAN PERSONALITY".

The grouping of the African intellectual society into two main divisions of English-speaking and French-speaking does exist, and is a historical fact. Difference of the two cultures has its shadows on the "African Personality". However, this language barrier, which is virtually between East and West Africa is gradually diminishing in the post-independence period. Meetings of the OAU the Uni-

ted Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the so many regional and inter-state get-togethers have softened this language problem—mainly through breaking other barriers and bringing the African states closer together. The ideal solution, of course, would be intensive person-to-person contacts between the African peoples themselves. It is sad to state that efforts are lagging behind in this respect.

African states have not yet drawn serious and long-term plans to intensify person-to-person contact between their respective peoples. The two African intellectual groups (that is, the English-speaking and the French-speaking ones) are too much attached to their parents abroad and face many other obstacles that keep them still apart. However, the cultural, intellectual and educational attachments of the French-speaking Africans with France are stronger than those in the case of Britain and the English-speaking Africans. This seems strange. Perhaps the British education in their colonies was not adequate in this sense. Also the British did not intermingle enough with the local people and in the local life. In most of their previous colonies their physical presence was virtually administrative and as central rulers. Very few of them were settlers.

The French, surely, did more than that. They have succeeded in transforming the life of the elite among their subjects into a new way of life closer to the French one.

Yet this foreign and intensive educational and cultural impact is being overshadowed by a new African outlook that has emerged after independence. Nowadays there is a growing desire for general African integration. In fact the OAU,—an organisation of independent African States—has for few years sounded the African ambition towards a 'United States of Africa'. This ambition, which was brought out by former President Nkrumah, still appears as a remote possibility and perhaps an unattainable dream in the present African circumstances.

Yet African unity has ever since been accepted by all African States as a common goal, a cherished hope, and an African aspiration. The road to unity, however, is very long and thorny. We the Africans have first to achieve complete liberation all over the African continent. We have also to defeat the separating forces of tribalism which are not only contrary to African unity, but also constitute a major threat to the national and territorial integrity of certain African States.

We have also to develop a general acceptance of the fact that Africa was the meeting place of many religions, creeds, races, languages and cultures which have to co-exist permanently and peacefully, for the sake of African togetherness.

Africa was never the birth-place of the two big religions, now practised by the majority of the people there. Islam and Christianity, both come to the Continent in one way or another from abroad, and the African land should never be utilised as an arena where the two religions should fight and hit at each other.

Missionary societies working inside Africa today have to accommodate this desire for African togetherness, or else, they have to be vacated. They have to adapt their teachings accordingly and to preach, first and before all, for unity and peaceful co-existence.

Many Christian missionaries, when Africa was "The Dark Continent" and through the collaboration of the colonial regimes, had sown the seeds of religious intolerance and had brain-washed the minds of some underdeveloped African converts into a very dangerous belief that they have to fight other fellow citizens for survival. This for example was very true in the Southern Sudan where White missionaries scared some southern citizens, against what they called "The Muslim Arab Slave Traders of the North". It was obscure and redundant gossip and the concerned foreign missionaries themselves knew that slavery and slave trade has long ago been wiped out of the Continent and would never return, but they utilised these allegations and many others to increase the psychological susceptibility of the local pagans to seek Christianity as a shelter.

There are still many pagans in Africa. And I feel there is still a need for religious and educational enlightenment. Religion as Jawaharlal Nehru in his *Discovery of India* rightly stated "supplied some deeply felt inner need of human nature" and that "the vast majority of people all over the world could not do without some form of religious belief. It has given a set of values to human life", and "has produced many fine types of men and women"....."as well as bigoted, narrow-minded, cruel, tyrants." In the case of the African pagans and converts this "inner need" which Pandit Nehru spoke for, should as much as possible be met by the Africans themselves, and through their own tools.

Foreign missionaries should quickly be Africanised, and the Church everywhere has to accept this in entirely good faith and cooperate to achieve it as a cherished African aspiration which is not at all inconsistent with religious enlightenment.

Africa is a young and youthful continent. The average educated African is full of youthful feelings—to the extent sometimes of being critical, blunt and pragmatic in persuing his national ambitions. In this urging desire to advance and to catch up with others, he is always seeking a change. This, to me, is among the reasons why many changes in Government, and in regimes are taking place within the African States, of late.

The youthful Africa is difficult to rule. Through coup d'états or through constitutional means, through the expulsion of military and fascist regimes or through civil strike or disobedience, the African is always for change.

Let us pray that the day shall never come when race or colour of the skin shall be a determining factor in International relations. There are, however, horrible predictions that the next world war, if ever, shall be the war among races of differing colours.

I am not a pessimist, and I do not share this belief. But the African heritage is full of the ugliest

human experiences. The experience of apartheid and the exploitation through the hypocritical reason of the skin being black or coloured.

The great martyr of African freedom and equality of races, Chief Albert Lutuli, once ironically thought that when apartheid has vanished from the world, its knowledge will enable the Africans of South Africa "to make their particular contribution to human progress".

Apartheid falsely believes that the African is to live only because his stock constitutes a labour resource. Therefore, he is to live only on this labour status and is to be brought up educationally, socially, psychologically and legally to accept this only status.

Today, the African, more than any other race, is paying high and hard for the fact that he is black and coloured. This is also true, yet to a less extent, in the case of Africans or peoples of African origin living in certain countries abroad. Sadly enough, this hostile feeling among races is picking up momentum specially in England, Australia and the United States.

Sometime ago, I lived in America for four years. I did not encounter any major racial complications, and I had made many white American friends. Yet I confess, that many times I had that inner feeling that perhaps I was not wanted around, and I rarely felt psychological comfort while living within an all-white American neighbourhood.

I wish this were a purely personal experience and were not an interpretation of a general rule.

Other trends of the "African Personality" are being formed by other recent factors. The "Defend-Africa" trend I should call it—Defend Africa Against Foreign Exploitation and Mischief. The economic survey of the troubled regions in Africa today adds further to the importance and the vitality of this

trend. It is not through sheer coincidence that almost all the rich parts of the Continent are still either under explicitly imposed foreign exploitation or are threatened to be so. South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, South-West Africa, Biafra as well as the Suez-Canal are all related problems created by extra African forces.

This feeling of a common enemy have brought, us, Africans, very closer together. Our griefs are giving the African solidarity a great forward push. The post-independence period helped us in many ways in tailoring African solutions for the problems confronting the Continent. The preservation of the independence and territorial integrity of the States which is explicitly embodied in the OAU, Charter, can only be fruitful and valid when all the African States avoid interference in the internal Affairs of each other and evade any encouragement to subversive activities directed against other African States from within their territories.

Because of the difference in the political structures and set-up from one African State to another—which ranges from the absolute monarchy in one place, to parliamentary democracy in another, to one progressive party rule in a third place, controversial arguments do sometimes arise as to what is a subversive action and what is a corrective action.

In a truly African spirit, and without mentioning names or places, we should all accept, as a common challenge, the fact the methods through which the African people are governed in some African States are still far from being ideal. We should, however, have faith in the future while recognising our defects and shortcomings. 'The African Personality' should look into the future only through well-conceived present circumstances. It does not help very much these days to limit our thoughts only to the far-fetched ideals.

campus journal

The Withering Faculty

THE most disturbing thing to have taken place in the campus in recent times is the erosion of the faculties in their academic sense. On the one hand there continues to be an accumulation of sheer brain: the specialists, the technologists, the ones enriched by the experience of the best universities abroad. On the

other, the faculties are being battered down by the ingress of an unacademic element which is positively hostile to any kind of scholastic pursuit of dedication.

The reasons are many. The first and the most apparent reason is of course the general drop in norms and values all over the educational spectrum.

It is there right from the primary school. The student is made aware through a hundred little things of the futility of the process. The degrees, diplomas and certificates have been progressively devalued, and none except the most ponderous of teachers would dare tell the student that his text books are

meant to be taken as serious manuals preparing him for life. The divorce of the curriculum from the disciplines and professions that the student might go into in life is total.

Thus there is no moral sanction behind the teacher's persuasion. The matriculate who is destined to become a messenger or a bus conductor cannot be asked to take his English prose and mathematics as a serious involvement. Nor can you ask the student headed for a Third Division B.A., to pursue his economics or political science with any passion, since that passion would hardly make any difference to him in his drab lifelong captivity as a lower division clerk.

The confusion over the medium has contributed in no mean measure to the incoherence of teaching and learning. And so, to plummeting standards. This has made the University vulnerable to the less committed or even to those who are totally devoid of commitment.

Yet another factor, and perhaps the most dismal, is the role of the private managements. These outfits embodied in the persons of financiers and 'philanthropists' making endowments of conscience money for the cause of education, is not a new presence in the campus. But earlier there was something forbiddingly impressive and aloof about the ceremony of a university which kept the under-literate promoter at a distance. Perhaps much of it was a facade, but even as a facade it served a desirable purpose, namely that of protecting the actual theatres of education from proprietorial slight.

This facade has collapsed, and we have enumerated the reasons which contributed to such collapse in varying degrees. With Independence the shopkeepers and moneylenders who had sunk money in the 'college business' acquired political influence, and this again gave them the brashness needed to trespass into the campus without feeling inferior. From that freedom from inferiority to the assumption of a role of domi-

nation took them very little time.

That is where we are today. The shopkeepers and moneylenders swarm all over the place, interfering, talking to the students over the heads of the principals, making ignorant and ill-informed suggestions of change in the schemes of education, and generally satisfying their ego. In a sense they are settling their score with education, a thing which eluded them in their own lives, and which today in their illiteracy and senility they are able to control and distort.

The Delhi University which is a central show piece has a lot of built-in academic authority which if put to intelligent use could have kept the proprietor away. But the rot has set in from that end too: we have had a succession of bureaucratic and unimaginative or weak and scared executives presiding over the University. These, each in his own way, have compounded with the moneylender. The worst offenders in this respect were the bureaucrats who served as Vice-chancellors here. At least one of them was an illustrious personality. But they brought with them, along with the illustriousness, a certain attitude of bureaucratisation, an excessive sense of strata and an unrelenting technicism, all of which tried to fit the academicians into a pattern of clerical hierarchy. And perched at the top of the hierarchy, these Vice-chancellors tended to deny the university teachers, particularly the teachers in the constituent colleges, the dignity of the campus.

Nothing could have pleased the proprietors better. They seized the new equation and sought to make it a permanent pattern of labour relationship. At least a couple of embittered Lecturers have recounted to us a demonstration of sorts they led to represent certain grievances before the then VC, Dr Deshmukh. The reception they got, they remember, underscored the superiority of the Vice-chancellor as a presiding executive, and also as a socially superior person. There was no sense of academic togetherness. The

classes were being defined and stated!

All this perhaps was inevitable. But the moneylender has made the tragedy of the campus cruder than it need be. His needs are eminently practical: he would need to keep a couple of useful Government officials like income tax men in good humour. Or maybe, someone in the ministries dealing with licences and things of that sort. It is thus that candidates with income tax and sales tax backgrounds get preference as lecturers, their number directly proportional to the culpability of the proprietor. There was the instance of a reputed college employing a retired Deputy Secretary of the Home Ministry as its principal. The College did so in preference to another applicant with exceptionally high qualifications and years of academic dedication behind her. It is a dismal joke; one is reminded of the deteriorating law and order situation on the campus, and a police takeover of the faculties, not just for the occasion but on a more or less permanent basis, does not look a bad arrangement after all.

The roles of the University authority, and of the University Grants Commission have been negative. A recent roving Commission of the UGC and the University in its dialogues with members of the teaching staff of various colleges conceded that the constituent colleges imposed unfair working conditions on its staff in comparison with conditions obtaining in the actual University faculties. The issue involved was a certain academic value, the need to prevent the emergence of caste within the two wings of the campus and to prevent the further debasement of one category of teachers. The Commission merely said, according to teachers who had occasion to participate in the dialogue, that caste was inevitable.

This is a gruesome premise to get started on. And it is, too, a confession of intellectual dishonesty. But, needless to say, it suits the moneylender like nothing else.

—Nalanda

The Darius Affair

At Teheran, Deputy Prime Minister Morarji Desai said that there was no conflict between India and Iran.—News.

'BUT what about Darius?' asked Charvaka, when the Dy. PM got back home.

'Who was that?' asked Sri Desai.

'Oh, well,' said Charvaka, 'that was the chap who invaded us. An Iranian.'

'The Union Government,' said Sri Desai, 'is not responsible for clandestine invasions. It will refuse to take any invasion into cognisance which is not official, which is not, in other words, backed by legitimate governments with whom we have friendly relations. This one must have been one of those sneaky-sneaky affairs.'

'No,' said Charvaka, and was proceeding to give details of the invasion of Emperor Darius, when the Deputy Prime Minister interrupted again.

'There are invasions and invasions,' said Sri Desai. 'Look for instance what happened along the Nagaland border with China.'

'I know, sir' said Charvaka, with a lot of sympathy. 'It was bad indeed.'

'Don't say that,' said Sri Desai. 'The invasion was illegal. In fact, for well over two years the Nagas kept receiving arms, sundry kits, medicines, food-stuffs, luxury items, Red Books, Chinese Parker pens...'

'We too have been getting our share of Chinese Parkers,' broke in Charvaka, whipping out his streamlined, ICBM shaped Chinese pen.

'Well,' said Sri Desai, 'the Chinese pens are different. They are a *quid pro quo* return for the instant coffee we send them through Nepal. After all, we've got to keep up a viable balance of trade.'

'That's right,' said Charvaka. 'Otherwise we'd have to send Sri Dinesh Singh to Peking to sort out the mess.'

'And you know what that

means,' said Sri Desai. 'For one thing, there's no knowing if Dinesh will like to go to Peking.'

'Delicate problems, sir,' admitted Charvaka, 'but we're getting off the main question.'

'True,' said Sri Desai, and resumed: 'I said the Nagas were receiving Red Books, Chinese Parker pens, Chinese communist diaries...'

Charvaka couldn't help interrupting, 'What were our own numerous Public Relations Officers doing? Our houses of business ought to have flooded the Naga Underground with diaries, calendars and similar gifts. That would have solved the Naga problem.'

'I'm glad you said it,' said Sri Desai. 'That was what I've been telling them day in and day out.'

'Then?' asked Charvaka.

'My Cabinet colleagues,' explained Sri Desai. 'But there're sutck on feds of doctrinaire socialism.'

'What a pity,' said Charvaka, suddenly brimming over with like-mindedness.

'A damned shame,' said Sri Desai, 'and a whopping scandal. What we ought to do to solve the Naga problem is to stop all talk of the small car, prosecute Dr Hazari for having endangered the territorial integrity of Ghan-shyam Das Kapital, prosecute Chandra Sekhar for quoting from Karl Marx and violating our copyright protocol with the Federal Republic of Germany, snap ties with the German Democratic Republic, refuse to buy the Russian TUs for Indian Airlines, liberalise controls or do away with them, liberalise terms of collaboration...'

'SIR!' said Charvaka.

'I could go on,' said Sri Desai, 'endlessly. I speak from the bottom of my heart.'

'I quite see that,' said Charvaka, 'but back to what the

Nagas were getting from China, sir; what else were they getting other than all that you've mentioned?'

'Well,' said Sri Desai, 'I was saying they were getting pens, watches, diaries, calendars, wasn't I? The Nagas were also getting weekly instructions on how to conduct the guerrilla struggle. In other words, there were regular links between the Chinese and the Nagas along the entire length of the border.'

'Lord,' said Charvaka, 'can we afford to say that? It would reflect on our Border Security arrangements. It would almost be like Patnaik saying that the Chinese Generals are better.'

'I don't care much for Pat's opinions,' said Sri Desai. 'He certainly was wrong here. Which Chinese General could have switched from a land job and taken up a sea job like Kaul did? You know Bijji joined the Tejas as their Public Relations Admiral in Tokyo, and wrote a book there and made strategic retreat to Delhi to preserve all his striking power against No. 17 Teen Murti Marg. Well, well, I'm digressing.'

'It's been a pleasure, sir,' said Charvaka, 'listening.'

'Well,' said Sri Desai, 'all that I wanted to say was that the infiltration was illegitimate, and our border chaps dismissed it with the contempt it deserved.'

'Oh, God,' said Charvaka, 'we nearly forgot. We were talking about Darius.'

'The Union Government have no information,' said Sri Desai firmly.

'But look at this, sir,' said Charvaka, holding out a history book. There was all the low-down on Darius.

'Ah,' said the Deputy Prime Minister, 'an invasion by an army we haven't recognised.'

'Might we compare it, sir,' asked Charvaka, 'to the strike by the firemen, all of whom belong to non-recognised unions, and hence don't exist as persons?'

'You certainly can,' said Sri Desai. 'And don't you listen to the AIR bulletins which say that nonexistent trains keep arriving in time despite the strike by the nonexistent unions?'

—Charvaka

Can A Country Have More Than One Communist Party?—V

S. A. DANGE

XIII

54 The foundation of the Communist Party of India owed its inspiration directly to the Communist International.

The October Revolution, and the establishment of the Socialist Soviet Republic inspired not only the workers of Europe but also the millions of the oppressed living under the colonial rule of the British and other imperialists. The Communist International in its Manifesto called upon the people of the colonies to rise in revolt.

There were as yet no Communist Parties as such, in the colonial countries. But after the formation of the Comintern, such parties began to take shape in various countries. It happened in India too.

The Communist Party of India was first founded in Tashkent by a group of emigre revolutionaries in the year 1921. As some of the leading figures, like M. N. Roy and Abani Mukerjee and others were already in the Comintern, the CPI was immediately given affiliation to the International. It published a journal in English, which was described as "Organ of the CPI, Section of the Communist International."

55. This CPI tried to establish links with those Communist groups, which had begun their work in India from 1921, in various parts of the country, particularly the groups in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Lahore. It also tried to send some of the Indian comrades, who had been under training in the University of the Toilers of the East to work in India.

But most of them failed to reach safely via the land route of the North West Frontier. They were caught and sentenced to imprisonment in what is known as the Peshawar Conspiracy Case in 1922-23. Soon the leadership of the Indian groups, which were just trying to come together and form a functioning centre on Indian soil was attacked and sent to prison in the Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case in 1924. Thus ended the first attempt at forming a centralised functioning Party on the Indian soil itself.

The earlier instalments of this thesis covering upto Section XII appeared in Mainstream, June 1, July 6, 13 and 20, 1968

At this stage, whatever problems of political line or ideology confronted the Indian Communists they had hardly any organ or opportunity to argue about. *The Socialist* which was the only paper we published in India and was edited by me, from 1922 to 1924, was not in a position to handle such questions for various reasons. It depended on the literature sent by the representative of the ECCI or the *Imvireccor* for its 'line' and the material for it. But that did not help much as most of the material that was sent fell into the hands of British Intelligence. We, however, found means to publish the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, and *Wage, Labour & Capital* and other pamphlets in Bombay in 1922.

56. The class-alliances and the political line of the revolution in the colonies was debated in the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920. Could the Communists, while keeping their independent existence as a Party, ally with the national bourgeoisie in the anti-imperialist revolution? Of course, yes, said the CI and Lenin. But who and how to judge the behaviour of the national bourgeoisie? Where was it really national and anti-imperialist and where was it only compradore?

Our misfortune in India was that our country was held by the British like a sealed box with a tight iron ring round it of police vigilance. Hence communication with or from the CI was very difficult. We never had those advantages which the Chinese had from the very beginning of their national revolution through direct contacts and help from the Soviet Union. The result was that we were left to the wisdom of M.N. Roy and his own interpretations of the the Comintern and the Theses of the Second World Congress. The Indian Party got moored into sectarian dogmatism from the very beginning, from which we used to find our way out by sheer pragmatism and the mood of the masses, among whom the Bombay section of our Party was building its base since the year 1923.

57. It is not our desire to write an outline of our Party history. Hence I shall skip over the years and many problems, until we reach the years' 1929.

Following the Kanpur Conspiracy Case in 1924 and our conviction to four years' imprisonment, we instructed those, who had gathered round us in the case, to hold a conference of Communists and esta-

blish a properly constituted Party and Central Committee inside the country. A conference was therefore held in 1925 at the time of the Kanpur session of the Indian National Congress. Hence, nowadays, we date the foundation of the Party from that conference year.

Some say that this Conference and the subsequent committees being nothing but the extension and continuation of the CPI as was founded in 1921 and affiliated to the CI, the birth date of the CPI should be 1961. Well, I personally would have no objection to adopting that date.

58. The Communists in India, though they had not much grounding in the science of Marxism-Leninism, forged very wide and deep links with the working-class in the country. They became the pioneers and leaders of the biggest strike struggles and founders of a really mass-based trade union movement. Not only they organised the battles for wages and trade union rights, they took the message of Communism, the Russian Revolution and the struggle against the British straight to the workers. If one were to scan the record of speeches presented to the court in the Meerut Conspiracy Case, one can judge how our trade unionism was based on political, anti-imperialist and revolutionary class struggle, at the same time fighting for the economic interests of the working class.

In this, we adhered to the line of the Communist International as we understood it and as also we were given to understand it, by those who came to advise us on behalf of the CI.

Let me mention here that while we were following a *correct mass-line*, there was some confusion on the organisational questions. Even then we functioned as a party; we were building a disciplined collective centre, though the vastness of the country and the problems were too big for a small band like ours.

Seeing our growing strength and the beginning of upsurge in the national revolutionary movement, the British attacked us again and rounded up almost our whole leadership in the Meerut conspiracy Case of 1929.

XIV

59 The Communist International held its Sixth World Congress in 1928. In this Congress, special attention was paid to the revolutionary movement in the colonial countries. Between the Fifth and Sixth World Congress, the heroic march of the Chinese Revolution had suffered a setback due to the betrayal of Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang which was the organ of the united national front, had split. The movement in India, Indonesia, Egypt, Africa and the USA required a review. Left adventurism and the votaries of the Permanent Revolution let by Trotsky were attacking the CPSU and the CI as having betrayed the Chinese Revolution and also the World Revolution. Trotsky, forty years before Mao Tse Tung, had thundered that the Soviet Union, under Stalin was building, not socialism but capitalism and by talking of "socialism in one

country" was deserting the world revolution of all countries.

As against this, Right reformism was claiming that capitalism had reconstructed itself and was stabilised. The wonderful schemes of high wages under the banner of Fordism in America and Mondism in England were putting the expected crisis and revolution far away on the calendar.

The Sixth Congress of the Comintern combatted both the deviations.

60. The Indian Party had not sent any delegation to the Congress. We were just recovering from the blows of the Kanpur Case, and were rebuilding our roots among the masses. The national movement as led by the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi had also not recovered since its last debacle of Bardoli, the split in its leadership, the imprisonment and temporary retreat of Mahatma Gandhi and the Hindu-Muslim divisions fomented by the British. The appointment of the Simon Commission, however, promised to become the starting point of a revival of the anti-imperialist upsurge.

In spite, of our refusal, four comrades, Shaukat Usmani being the leading one, differed with our decision and went underground. They reached Moscow for the World Congress.

The Indian delegation however, had no idea of the Indian situation. Not one of them had any roots among the mass-movement. Some of them knew India from written reports and books, as they had left the country years ago. They did not know what Gandhism really was and what role it was playing. Some of them only saw its obscurantist features and forgot its anti-imperialist progressive content. Following Chiang Kai-shek's betrayal the Sixth Congress Theses was coloured by that single event more than by anything else in its evaluation of the colonial situation. Even then the ultimate outcome was not unbalanced and contained warnings against both deviations.

61. A reference to the proceedings of the Sixth World Congress would show us how the Indian delegation (unauthorised though it was) thought and how the leaders from the CPSU tried to intervene. The Indian delegation intervened eighteen times in the debate on the "Decolonisation Theory" said to have been propounded by M. N. Roy, who, however, was himself absent at the Congress and was said to have been in Berlin due to ill health. For the spokesmen of the delegation, there was no possibility left for the Indian national bourgeoisie to play "a revolutionary role" particularly after "the historic betrayal at Bardoli in 1922". For them, persons like Subhas Chandra Bose were "already in the counter-revolutionary camp". It was Comrade Kusinen (the mover of the Colonial Theses) who tried to draw a distinction between the Swarajist leaders on the one hand and persons like Jawaharlal Nehru on the other, whom he characterised as "national revolutionary." (*Impreccor* July-August 1928-pp. 1525).

But the trend refused to be corrected and it played havoc subsequently in our Party after we were all arrested in 1929.

62. Into the hands of the young and inexperienced leaders that were left behind fell an organised working class, pots of money in the Trade Unions and boundless enthusiasm. The result was strikes were called without much thought. Wrong tactics led to their failure and disruption, particularly in Bombay, the main centre of the Party.

When the national movement rose by leaps and bounds, these young leaders attacked its leadership as counter-revolutionary betrayers. The Congress Flag which the masses took as a symbol of anti-imperialist struggle was torn down and the Red Flag put up *against* it (not side by side in cooperation with it). Both Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Bose were denounced. The All-India Trade Union Congress was split twice in a period of two years. Other big unions in Railways, Textiles also suffered the same fate.

63. Ultimately, Left sectarianism did not stop there. *The Communist Party also broke into two.* The honour of doing it was carried by none other than the well-known comrade B. T. Ranadive of continuing fame! He found himself in a minority in the Central Committee led by Comrade S. V. Deshpande. He walked out and established a new "Workers Party".

That was our first taste of the split in India. What was to be done now? Were we now to live with two Communist Parties? Fortunately, there was the Comintern to appeal to.

The ECCI after receiving the report decided to call representatives from both sides to come to Moscow and argue out their case and reestablish unity.

Comrade Ranadive refused to go and submit the dispute to the CI for whom he had the greatest "intellectual contempt". I do not want to quote the words he used in his reply. They were something worse.

64. Differences arose among us also inside the Meerut Jail on several questions, including the attitude to the Congress movement that had begun outside. And it should be remembered here that Mahatma Gandhi had paid us a visit in the Meerut Jail before launching his movement of 1930.

I had the misfortune to be the leader of these differences, which were influenced by the events and splits in Bombay. The result was that I was expelled from the prison group.

This dispute also went to the ECCI which asked me to send my representative to Moscow to argue out and settle the differences. I agreed and directed the arrangements to be made. But the underground organisation did not succeed in smuggling out the comrade concerned.

The ECCI then sent its representatives to India to study the situation. Some of them belonged to the Trotskyite trend and some to the correct CI line. Some of them were found and deported by the police. But that is a different story.

65. How then were the differences settled? They hung fire till the main bulk of the Meerut leaders

were released. By that time both the Party and trade union wings were laid prostrate. The rise of Nazism in Germany and the need for unity all around were trying to tell their lessons through the CI. The Meerut leaders, who had more experience and prestige succeeded in persuading Ranadive to dissolve his Party and rejoin the CPI. He agreed though he was prevented from holding any post for a period. The Party was united in 1933.

The organisational unity did not lead to political unity. Ranadive pursued his line and kept his group intact.

The Party line said that we had committed sectarian mistakes. The ECCI held that we should re-enter the National Congress and work inside it. Though the argument that was given was still sectarian, the organisational-tactical conclusion was correct.

66. When the Party refused to follow this advice, the Chinese Communist Party, the German Party, the British Party addressed letters to the CPI urging it to give up its wrong line. Still there was resistance to it. Then Comrade P. C. Joshi, who now had become the General Secretary (in semi-underground conditions) called for the change. I had already joined the Congress after my release, which took place later than that of the others. I got elected to the AICC by defeating Shankar Rao Deo, who was the Secretary of the Congress from Maharashtra. The event attracted wide attention. I put the CPI line at the Faizpur Congress and thus made known to the world the change in the line of the CPI, and the adoption of the National Front tactics by the CPI after a struggle of nearly eight years. The price we paid for our sectarianism and for our refusal to heed the Comintern and also our mass line has yet to be calculated by history.

67. If we had no sense of proletarian internationalism, if we had no Comintern to guide, if we had no loyalty to the CI and its democratic centralism, we would not have remained on the map of revolutionary history and would have been consigned to the dustbin, as the Trotskyites and other adventurists as also the revisionists of the Second International were. Without the guiding hand of proletarian internationalism, whether functioning through an organised world centre or through a mutually agreed ideological political faith and discipline, the international working-class cannot win the world revolution.

XV

68 The Second World War broke out in 1939 and a new world situation came into being.

As to how the war broke out, how it was a "phony" war at the beginning, how the British and French and US imperialists had failed in their calculations to turn Hitler to attack the Soviet Union alone and leave these imperialist powers to share the spoils on the dead body of both in a war of extermination, how the wise tactics of the Soviet Party and Government broke through the imperialist

encirclement and made the imperialists fight each other is so much recent history. That we will not go into here. When Hitler had overrun Western Europe and sealed the continent against the British and US he attacked the Soviet Union and met his doom at the hands of the Red Army.

69. The fact that the British and US imperialists had to enter into an alliance with the Soviet Union created quite an unprecedented situation for the working class and Communist Parties of the world as well as the Communist International. The working-class and the ruling bourgeoisie in countries like Britain, US and France, etc, had now one common aim: the defeat of Hitler and the defence of their country. A distinction had to be made between one set of imperialists led by Nazism, that is an open, terroristic rule of the monopoly bourgeoisie out to annihilate the Soviet Union and all progressive forces, and the other set of imperialists of Britain, France and US who for their own self-interest had to fight against the very monster of Nazism they had raised and also to keep some allegiance to bourgeois democracy and liberal principles.

Their differentiation was quite evident for the Communist Parties of the free European countries. But it was not and could not be so evident to the Parties of those colonial countries who were held in subjection by these very "liberal" imperialists. In fact bourgeois nationalist and liberationist senti-

ment in the colonies desired the defeat of their oppressors at anybody's hands, though they did not support the victory of Nazism. Thus the subject of support or opposition to war after 1941 became a big issue in the Communist movement.

70. The Communists of the world rallied in defence of the Soviet Union and for the defeat of Hitler. But the situation had become too complicated. Moreover, the perspectives that were to open up at the end of the war were quite unpredictable.

In such a situation, the leadership of the International took the decision after consulting the affiliated parties to dissolve the International. *The world directing centre of Communism came to an end in June 1943.*

Thus in a way, each Party was now empowered to decide its observance of the obligations of proletarian internationalism according to its own light.

71. The essence of the decision was that with the increasing complications in internal and international relations of various countries, any sort of international centre would encounter insuperable obstacles in solving the problems facing the movement in each separate country. The organisational form of uniting the workers chosen in the first stages of the movement had been outgrown by the movement and by the complications of its problems in separate countries. *Hence the International had*

12 hours of Sunshine



Kalpana-GEC-366

12 hours of

Osram

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become a drag on further strengthening of the national working-class parties. In fact the Seventh Congress in 1935 had emphasised the need for "great flexibility and independence of its sections" and that the Executive should "make a rule for avoiding interference in the internal organisational matters of the Communist Parties." The decision also took into consideration the growth and political maturity of Communist Parties and their leading cadres in separate countries.

72. Looking at the history of the period following the dissolution and the recent discussions in the world Communist movement, one may raise some doubts about the decision to dissolve the International, without anything to follow it to meet at least some of the needs of the Communist movement. That the problems of each Party in its national sphere and of all Parties in the international sphere had become complicated is a fact; that the situation was such that a single centre could not solve all the political organisational problems in the old ways and that the Parties and their cadres had developed maturity is also a fact.

However, this fact seems to have been a little exaggerated. As for interference in the organisational matters of the Sections of the CI that too seems to have been a little overdrawn. The CI, did not intervene unless the Parties raised problems before it or unless the Party concerned did, something obviously wrong. No doubt it is a sound principle to allow each Party "independence" to decide things for itself but "independence" to the extent of splitting, of attacking brother parties and denouncing them or taking an obviously anti-Marxist course, certainly was not sought for by any Section of the CI.

There have been instances where the advice of the CI might have proved wrong and sometimes been temporarily harmful to the party concerned. The organisational form might have become outdated and a drag on further development. But the necessity for some clearing house of ideas, some assaying forum or centre, (may be without the highly rigid and centralised structure of the Comintern but with surely with some structure) has remained and still remains a necessity. It is inherent in the very principle of proletarian internationalism, which cannot live and function on the basis of a complete organisational vacuum, or obligations of common international and national action.

But the dissolution was a necessity as a tactical manoeuvre, to meet the post-war situation, as the CI leadership saw it.

73. The post-war situation, however, turned out to be different in a very short time than was expected. The US imperialists, led by Winston Churchill's Fulton speech, launched a cold war against the Soviet Union, the new socialist countries and whole of the national liberation movement that was sweeping throughout the colonial world. Hence, the necessity for a new organ for consultation among those Communist Parties, which were in the thick of the arena was felt. As a result, the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform) came into existence.

We shall next see how once again the Indian Party and its problems of political line and organisation, which had gone wrong had to be set right by the intervention of proletarian internationalism and its new instrument, the Cominform.

(To be Continued)

CLASS-STRUGGLES IN FRANCE (Continued from Page 16)

There were massive demonstrations simultaneously in ten big cities of France.

On the same day, DeGaulle made his first television speech on the crisis, announcing a referendum on June 16, which was to empower the General to carry out educational and other reforms for the renovation of France! This hollow demagogic pose calculated to perpetuate the regime of personal power was utterly rejected by all Left Parties.

DeGaulle's speech was, however, accompanied by a concession. On May 25, negotiations between the TU leaders and the respective representatives of the employers and the Government began. The powerful demonstration of May 24, had hastened the concession. On the same day, the CGT through a statement warned the workers: "General strike is the only means of enforcing the general, as well as the particular demands of the workers and employees of all sectors, of all professions—so strengthen the strike front, hold meetings in your respective factories."

It was thus not a case of reducing a great political upheaval to an ordinary economic strike and negotiations, but a case of strengthening and broadening the strike front in struggle for economic de-

mands so that it may rise to forge a higher unity of workers and democratic forces necessary to advance towards a Government of Democratic Unity.

On May 27, while the mighty actions of the 10 million strong striking workers and employees continued, the outcome of the first round of negotiations between the employers and the Government on the one hand and the representatives of the workers was being reported in hundreds of workers' meetings in factories and workshops. The CGT leadership in a statement published the same day said: "The employers and the Government reject the annulment of the ordinance imposing cut in social security benefits. They offer about 10 per cent rise in wages, while other demands were not considered." The CGT had told the employers and the Government that they reserved the right of reply till the strikers have expressed their opinions on the same; the CGT was sure of the support of the workers and will fight further for their demands.

This CGT statement disposes of the canard circulated by the Western agencies and reproduced in the Indian press that the CGT leadership had agreed to the 10 per cent wage rise offer but were repudiated by the strikers. Actually on May 28, it was

ublished that 10 million strikers in hundreds of their factory meetings had rejected the offer and had resolved to continue the strike till all their demands were met. Besides numerous strike committees, with Renault Action Committee at their head, passed resolutions calling upon all Left Parties to unite on the basis of a common minimum programme so that a popular Government of Democratic Unity can be formed.

In the last three days of May, when the great strike front was reaching its climax in strength, breadth and mobilising capacity, its two weaknesses became apparent. The first was the vacillating attitude of the Leftist Federation of Mitterand on the question of agreement of all Left Parties to a minimum common programme for the formation of a people's Government of Democratic Unity. The Leftist Federation has a base among the working class which is nearly as big as that of the CP of France. The two together and with the CGT make up the overwhelming majority of workers and employees and become the base of a united front of all Leftist and democratic forces. That is why the vacillation of the Leftist Federation on that issue was a serious matter.

Renovation of France

On May 27, the Politburo of the CP of France called upon all groups and parties that stood by the working class and democracy to come together to forge a common programme which is anti-monopoly, which is bold and which will be a programme of renovation of France and of paving the way to socialism. The Communist Party warned: Failure to agree to such a programme will lead to giving a new lease of life to the Gaullist regime; and it proposed an immediate meeting of the representatives of the Left Federation, the CP of France and of the Trade Union bodies. It pointed out that it is the working out of such common programme and agreement on the same, that will give force to our demand for the dissolution of the National Assembly and for fresh general elections.

The urgency for a Communist-Left Federation meet was underlined by rumours afloat in Paris about a manoeuvre being considered in the circles of the PSU (Left Radicals under Mendes France) and of the Left Federation of some sort of "an interim solution" to replace the discredited DeGaulle regime. This was to be a Government from which the Communists and C.G.T. were to be excluded. A readymade list of a new Cabinet with M. Mendes France as Premier and M. Mitterand as President was being talked about. Obviously such a Government counted upon the goodwill of DeGaullists and Rightists.

On May 29, Comrade Rochet and Mitterand met behind closed doors and thereafter the negotiations between the two parties started. The Communist Party of France stressed the urgency of agreement and defined its aim as the setting-up of a People's Government of Democratic Unity based on Leftist Parties and from which Rightwing parties are excluded—a Government which sets itself the aim of realising a common minimum programme. The

Communist Party of France was prepared to take its due share in such a Government.

In support of this stand, the CP France and the CGT held on May 29 massive demonstrations in Paris and in other cities of France. In Paris, over half a million demonstrated in a huge procession headed by the entire leadership of the CGT and of the Communist Party of France. The main slogans of the demonstrations were: A people's Government of Democratic Unity; Unity of Action; a common programme; DeGaulle resign.

This was a powerful backdrop indeed for the negotiations between the Communist Party of France and the Left Federation which were proceeding then. However, as is known, they did not lead to full programmatic unity with the result that the two Parties were not able to come forward unitedly before the general elections and agree on common candidates for the first round of polling. So that weakness remained.

The second weakness was the uncontrolled and adventurist actions of some of the leading groups among the students. After the working class had come in full support of the students' demands, the students were continuing to occupy the university and to hold back the student area of the city. They also continued their clashes with the police. The Communist Party of France and the CGT which bore the brunt of fighting back repression warned the students against these adventurist tactics. The ruling circles exaggerated these student actions and used them to swing the middle elements to support the use of police force against the movement as a whole.

Adventurist Tactics Supported

The PSU supported these adventurist tactics and attacked the CP of France for not going in for militant actions. The Communist Party and CGT firmly rejected the adventurist tactics and stressed the need for building broadbased democratic unity on the basis of a common programme. These adventurist tactics in the given situation only played into the hands of the Gaullists and reactionaries to disrupt the broad front and to sway away the middle sections. The powers-that-be who were exaggerating the violent student activities in their own interests, knew who was their main enemy. As a big bourgeois French paper wrote: "The black and Red Flags on the barricades may be artistic but the Red Flag on the Renault Works was something serious."

From May 30, the situation of class struggle in France sharpened. The ruling class had made up its mind on its strategy of reactionary consolidation and a differentiated attack on the united strike front. On May 30, came DeGaulle's speech postponing *sine die* his earlier referendum call, announcing the dissolution of the National Assembly and fixing the general elections for the dates June 23 and 30. The General had launched a rabid attack on the Communist Party and other Left Parties. He threatened to use emergency measures if the strike continued. He raved that the movement was maintained by tactics of

"pressure, poisoning and tyranny."

DeGaulle's move came after his secret visit to Baden Baden, West Germany on May 29, where he confabulated with General Massu, the Commander of the French Occupation Forces there. What passed between them was reported by the Paris paper *Aurore* some days later, in the form of a record of the conversation between the Generals. DeGaulle asked for the support of the Army to crush "the Communist subversion". General Massu replied that it would be a risk. Common recruits will not shoot at civilians; there are, of course, professional soldiers who could do the job but they must get guarantees for the future. In this connection DeGaulle was asked about the release of General Salan from prison.

The Secret Deal

The deal was struck as later events showed. On May 30, tank convoys were sighted near Paris, pictures of which appeared in the press next day. The troops concentration near Paris was reinforced with 30,000 troops from West Germany. It is only after this that the first mass demonstration of some 10,000 DeGaulle supporters paraded through Champs Elysees, a wealthy sector of Paris. That was the same day on which DeGaulle announced the elections. Soon afterwards, reactionaries who had fought DeGaulle on the Algerian question—like Bidault and Salan—were amnestied. Gaullists began forming so-called Citizens' Action Committees. Paris began swarming with army units, with fascist formations of OAS.

The working class reply to this strategy was given by the CGT on May 31: "The strike movement embraces the majority of the French people which will not allow itself to be intimidated. No threats would succeed in restoring normal conditions. What was needed was a resumption of negotiations at all levels now that the workers have rejected the first offer." The CGT declared itself ready for new negotiations.

The instructions to the embattled strike Committees were: Not to get provoked, to avoid bloody clashes and not give excuse to the ruling power for a massive intervention before the elections.

The Politburo of Communist Party of France issued similar statement on June 4: Use the coming elections to defeat Gaullist and other reactionaries, forge unity of Left and democratic forces. In reply to De Gaulle it said: It is not Gaullism vs. Communism. The real question before France is dictatorship or democracy. The main task at present is to win the demands of the fighting workers and employees.

In the first days of June, the Government attempted to use police force to clear some post offices and a railway station. Strike posts resisted but where police forces were overwhelming, they withdrew to avoid provocation. On June 5, again in the wealthy parts of Paris some 20,000 right-wingers held a demonstration. Their slogans were "Hang Rochet and Mitterand", "Salan is with us". Fascist forces were mobilising under police and army

protection. On June 6, one thousand policemen fell upon workers and strike posts of the occupied Renault factory at Flins. Workers resisted; 24 were seriously injured.

Against this Gaullist offensive and provocation, the strike front remained firm. Workers resisted but did not take on the confrontation with police forces. The strike front got a shot in the arm when on June 3, the entire Television and Radio workers and employees joined the strike. *Le Monde* characterised it as "a thing which had never happened before; the behaviour and the consciousness of the strikers was of such high level that they placed the demand for the reform of the radio and television system in precedence to their economic demands."

It is against this background that in the first week of June, in the fresh round of negotiations that were started, the employers and the Government began to make substantial concessions to the workers in various industries. On June 5, it was reported that Electricity, Gas and Transport workers and many other smaller industries had won their demands. Miners won a 14.1 per cent wage rise. On June 6, *L'Humanite* stated: "Today workers in different sections of our national life are able to conclude the strike on a successful basis."

At this time, the Western press was reporting that the strike was fizzling out. Actually what was happening in the first week of June was a disciplined and triumphant return to work, having won the demands. Resumption of work, took place industry by industry with Red Flags flying. All the workers who were able to resume work, having won demands, paid their first day's wage as a contribution to the strike fund for those still on strike.

Vindictive Approach

On June 8, the CGT leadership at its press conference reviewed the situation thus: "The majority of striking workers and employees have gone back to work, winning unquestioned victory. Over two million Metal and Engineering industry workers continue the strike. The employers of these industries are refusing to settle on the demands of the workers. Premier Pompidou supports this vindictive approach of the employers towards these workers who stood at the head of the strike movement." The CGT called for solidarity actions in support of these workers.

The warning of the CGT was not a moment too early. The police attack on the Renault workers at the Flins factory was followed on June 11, by an unheard of police provocation against Pugeot factory workers in Sochaux. Armed police broke into the factory and attacked the strike guards on duty. In the scuffle that ensued, two firearms of the police were snatched away by the workers who broke them to pieces immediately. In the resulting clash, a young worker was killed by a police bullet.

Same night another clash took place in the student area, leading to barricade fighting with several injured. The cause of this clash was the death of a 18-year old school boy in Flins where 10,000

Renault workers were continuing their strike.

These incidents suddenly sharpened the situation and on the same day the CGT issued a call to all workers and employees in France to go on a one-hour protest strike on June 2. The response to this call was phenomenal. Twelve million responded to it and brought all wheels throughout Paris and France to a standstill for an hour. This showed that the working class, though the majority had gone back to work, stood, mobilised and embattled, ready to rebutt the police provocation.

Reviewing the results of this action, the Secretary General of the CGT said on June 15: the clashes at the Flins and Sochoux in which two workers were murdered by the police threatened to involve the movement in large-scale bloody confrontation with the police and army units, which could have only given the ruling power the chance to set up a military dictatorship. The workers understood the meaning of our call and by their massive response have forced the Government to desist from open police provocations.

Gaullist Tactics

The strike, he pointed out, had another result: The employers of the Renault, Peugeot and Citroen works were forced to resume negotiations with the workers and continue them round the clock under prssure of trade unions.

It is time that the open police provocations stopped and in the next four or five days that is upto June 19-20 the demands of the workers of Renault, Peugeot and Citroen factories were conceded and their strike ended. But the Gaullist anti-Communist Provocation, which began in a big way with the election speech of DeGaulle on June 8 continued in a different form. DeGaulle said he was against the both capitalism and communism. He was for economic and social reform for the renovation of France and for the participation of the working people in the life of France. But the Communists, he said, stood for the subversion of all that France stood for. He asked for a vote against Communist subversion. This anti-Communist demagogu was accompanied by the release and amnesty to downright anti-Communist reactionaries like Bidault and General Salan, who had fought DeGaulle himself on the question of Algeria. It was accompanied by the formation of Citizens Action Committees, which were a sort of counterweight to the Action Committees for Government of Democratic Unity formed by the workers. It was accompanied by the swarming of Paris by all manner of OAS and other fascist formations, which functioned freely under the protection of police and army units with which Paris was now full.

A correspondent reported on June 19: Just four days before the first polling day, armed bands of OAS volunteers, Citizens' Action Committee fascist group were on the rampage. Several attacks on workers' areas and attacks on students hostels were reported. Communist Party offices were heavily guarded, so no one touched them. Factories still on strike had, double these guards. Political circles,

said the correspondent, interpret this terror rampage by the rightist groups as a calculated move to intimidate the petty bourgeois sections and prevent them voting Left.

The Communist Party in its election campaign firmly repudiated the charge of subversion and exposed the Gaullist tactics, "It is a real piece of shamelessness when DeGaulle dares to accuse the Communist Party of 'totalitarianism' and of 'subversion.' It is a case of a thief himself crying 'stop thief!'" The Government has done everything to create disorder and climate of instability by protracting negotiations with workers and employees, by organising police provocation and by letting loose a real poisoned propaganda campaign...He has organised subversive groups of the so-called 'Citizens' Action Committees'. He has threatened to set up a dictatorship...The Gaullist power is the arch organiser of disorder." This is quoted from Waldeck Rochet's election speech on June 10. As against this, he outlined the Communist tactics thus: "In this difficult situation, it was the attitude of our Party which made it possible to avoid the violent confrontation which the ruling power sought and even now seeks perhaps to finally use it for the setting up of a military dictatorship."

Rochet sharply repudiated the adventurist tactics of the Anarchists, Maoists and Trotskyists, who, he said, laid claim to teach the working people "how to make revolution". Rochet said with great emphasis: "If the calculation of the Gaullist power and of the ultra-Left groups did not come off, then one has to thank the healthy commonsense of the working class, the correct analysis of the Communist Party and the wisdom of its policies which is based on respect for democracy." Rochet made it clear that the Party never equated these Left groups with the mass of students, who were then repudiating them.

Ringing Words

In ringing words, Rochet repudiated the national demagogu of DeGaulle and his kind: "Marseillaise is not a Gaullist hymn. It is a national song of the French people, a militant song against exploitation and for freedom. The tricolour is not the private property of the employers and their power. It is the property of the entire people. The word patriot stems from the great French Revolution. That is why we seek to unite firmly together the ringing notes of the *Marseillaise* with those of the *Internationale*, the tricolour of the nation with the Red Flag of the working class. It is not for the representatives of big capital to rewrite the history of France: The Red Flag of the Commune is the flag of the emancipation of the working people. It is also the banner under which the population of Paris organised the resistance to the capitulation to Bismarck."

The Communist Party in its election manifesto put forward a programme of radical structural reforms, a programme of setting up a really democratic regime which pave the way to socialism. The issue in the elections, he again emphasised, is not between Gaullism and Communism. The people

have to choose between—

“a personal power, which with its reactionary and anti-social measures, is paving the way to military-dictatorship;

“—or a new Democracy which rests on the alliance of the workers and all the forces of democracy, of progress, of which the Communists form an integral part.”

Those who malign the CP of France should note a few facts. George Morchais, Secretary of CPF disclosed in *L'Humanité* on June 21: “In the five weeks since May 13, twenty thousand new members have joined the Communist Party of France. This is the reply of the French workers, technicians, doctors, artists and students to the raging anti-Communist propaganda that is rising every day.” In the same period, 40 thousand new members joined the CGT, mostly youth, according to *Neues Deutschland* June 28. General Secretary of youth Communist League announced on June 17 that since May 13 sixteen thousand youth have joined the YCL. The newly formed YCL group adopted the names of Maurice Thorez, Anne Frank, Romain Rolland, among others.

Paradoxical Result

In the four weeks of the strike struggle and the two weeks of the election campaign, it was the Communist Party and the CGT which came forward with a clear and firm lead and a correct tactics based on the realities of the situation. It was the Communist Party of France which from the beginning and throughout the period argued and fought to achieve the unity of all Left Parties, especially of the Communist Party of France and the Left Federation and to strive for the basis of a common minimum programme—which was consistently anti-monopoly and paved the way to socialism. The programmatic unity of the two parties was the key to lift the broad unity of the working class achieved in the unprecedented general strike to a higher plane of political action.

This could not be achieved because of the vacillating attitude of the leadership of the Left Federation. The adventurist overtones of the PSU (Radical Socialists) and other ultra-Left groups, though they did not find any support in the broad mass of the working class, did create a certain confusion. It is these two weaknesses in the great strike front which were utilised by the Gaullists. Their anti-Communist demagoguery and the terrorist rampage of fascist groups carried out under police protection, succeeded in swinging the middle class elements, because programmatic unity was not forged in time.

Thus came the paradoxical result that after four weeks of glorious and unprecedented general strike of 10 million workers when all wheels throughout France stopped, reaction wins the elections and there is a distinct shift to the Right.

In 1936, four and half million struck work and occupied factories for three and half weeks and in the General Elections that followed soon afterwards the Popular Front won an absolute majority against

the reactionary Government of fascist appeasement. It was the political unity of the working class that made the difference.

Specific Reply

The question remains: Why did the Communist Party of France and the CGT wait on helplessly for unity with the Left Federation? When they knew it was not coming, why did they not lead the vanguard of the working class which solidly supported them into more militant actions and thus transform the situation? In other words, why did they not go in for revolutionary actions instead of going in for electioneering? The change was made by the PSU, that the Communist Party of France betrayed the revolution”. Jean Paul Sartre has recently repeated the charge in an interview given to a West German weekly *Der Spiegel*. The general answer to this is already implicit in the review given above. However, a specific reply was given by the Communist Party of France on June 8 and it is worth reproducing here:

“Yes, there are some who play at revolution, like Queen Marie Antoinette played at being a shepherdess in the garden of the Petit Trianon.”

“In reality, there was in France a movement of people's demands without precedents. But for there to be a revolutionary situation, two conditions must be fulfilled:

1. It is not enough that the main forces of the nation should be in movement—which was the case—it is also necessary for them to be won for the idea of a social revolution. But this was not the case for all the ten million workers on strike, even less so for the middle sectors (particularly the peasants).
2. It is necessary for the state to be disintegrating. But even if the Government was crippled, the regular army with its tanks and planes was holding itself ready to seize the pretext of the least adventure to drown the workers' movement in blood and to instal a military dictatorship.”

In conclusion, it is useful to note in brief the main contents of the report submitted by Waldeck Rochet to the plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France which was held on July 8, 10, 1968 in Nanterre, suburb of Paris, and which was unanimously accepted by the same:

* The Gaullist regime has got a lease of life, though it is condemned to fail.

* The present situation as has developed out of events of May and June is apparently contradictory and confusing at the first glance.

* A shocking paradox is that despite the mighty struggles of the working people, there is a strong shift to the Right in the country.

* The fact that a single party—the Gaullist Party has been able to monopolise all power is a serious danger to all democratic liberties—a very disturbing step towards fascination of the regime. Therefore, it is necessary that Communists should coolly face the

facts and the reality.

* In a situation in which the military and repressive might was concentrated in one hand, the intention of certain ultra-Leftist groups to take an adventurist course was firmly and absolutely rejected by the people.

* The Communist Party has foiled the criminal calculations of the Gaullists by the correctness of its policy, by its sense of realism, and by its consciousness of its responsibility to the working class and to the people. That is without doubt the greatest achievement of the Party and its leadership in the long struggles of the months of May and June.

"Our idea is that the Gaullist power of the monopolists is to be replaced by a Government of Democratic Unity not through subversion but by the clear, democratically expressed will of the people. Because that is the only perspective which in the present stage corresponds to the interests of the workers, of the entire people and of the nation itself. And for the victory of this perspective, we count not on adventurism but on political struggle, on the peaceful struggle of the broadest masses of the people."

The resolution adopted by the same Plenum outlined the tasks as follows:

The point now is to consolidate the results of the strike movement. The breadth, the power and the close unity of the movement in which the Communist Party played such an eminent role has brought important economic and social achievements.

The Communist Party, together with mass of students and teachers, would continue the struggle for the renovation of the universities, for the democratisation of the system of education and combine this struggle with that of the working class.

The outstanding problems have not been solved. The Gaullist regime is incapable of solving them in the interests of the people and the nation. Therefore, the Communist Party of France appeals to the working people and to all democrats to continue the action for a democratic alternative to the Gaullist power.

TABLE I

Results of the First Round of Polling (June 23, 1968)

Total Electorate: 28,171,635

Percentage of Polling: 80.1 percent

No. of constituencies: 487

Parties	Votes polled 23.6.68	Per- centage	Votes polled 1967	Per- centage
Gaullists				
(UDR)	9,663,605	43.65	8,453,512	37.75
Communists	4,435,357	20.05	5,029,808	22.46
Left Federa- tion	3,654,003	16.50	4,207,166	18.76
Centrists	2,290,165	10.34	2,864,272	12.79
P.S.U. *(Left Radicals)	874,212	3.94	506,592	2.26
Others	1,221,315	5.54	1,330,967	5.95

* PSU increased its percentage of votes than in 1967. This time it put in three times as many candidates as in 1967.

TABLE II

Results of the Second Round of Polling June (30, 1968)

Parties	Final seats won	Votes polled	Per- centage
Gaullists	358	6,762,672	46.4
Communists	34	2,935,775	20.1
Left Federation	57	3,097,338	21.3
Centrists	27	1,141,305	7.8
Others	9	640,824	4.4
	485		

If a system of proportional representation had obtained, the distribution of seats would have been as follows:

Gaullists	205
Communists	94
Left Fedn.	77
PSU	18
Centrists	49
Others	42
	485

SOVIET ARMS SUPPLY AND INDIAN REACTION (Continued from Page 7)

we should accept these assurances as coming from a friendly country and from statesmen who have stood by us.

The professional anti-Soviet baiters and internal critics of the Indian foreign policy, as evolved and developed by Jawaharlal Nehru, would utilise this episode to question its fundamentals and its very basis. They should be given massive rebuff. They are the forces which have prevented

flexibility in our dealings with our neighbours—though hostile at the moment. What is their alternative? Their alternative would mean equidistance from the Soviet Union and the West, further aggravation of relations with China and Pakistan and isolation from the Arab world. In reality, this policy would amount to India getting herself isolated from the bulk of the world progressive forces, and

hostility in the region from the Pacific to Gibraltar.

A nation of 500 million people should ultimately rely on its own internal strength and spiritual and material resources. The world picture is changing fast, making all alliances and relationships obsolete. In this situation a new approach has to be worked out in the framework of our policy of non-alignment, world peace and peaceful co-existence.]

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 1963

35

How to Talk to PEKING

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Language
Formula
in
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Debate



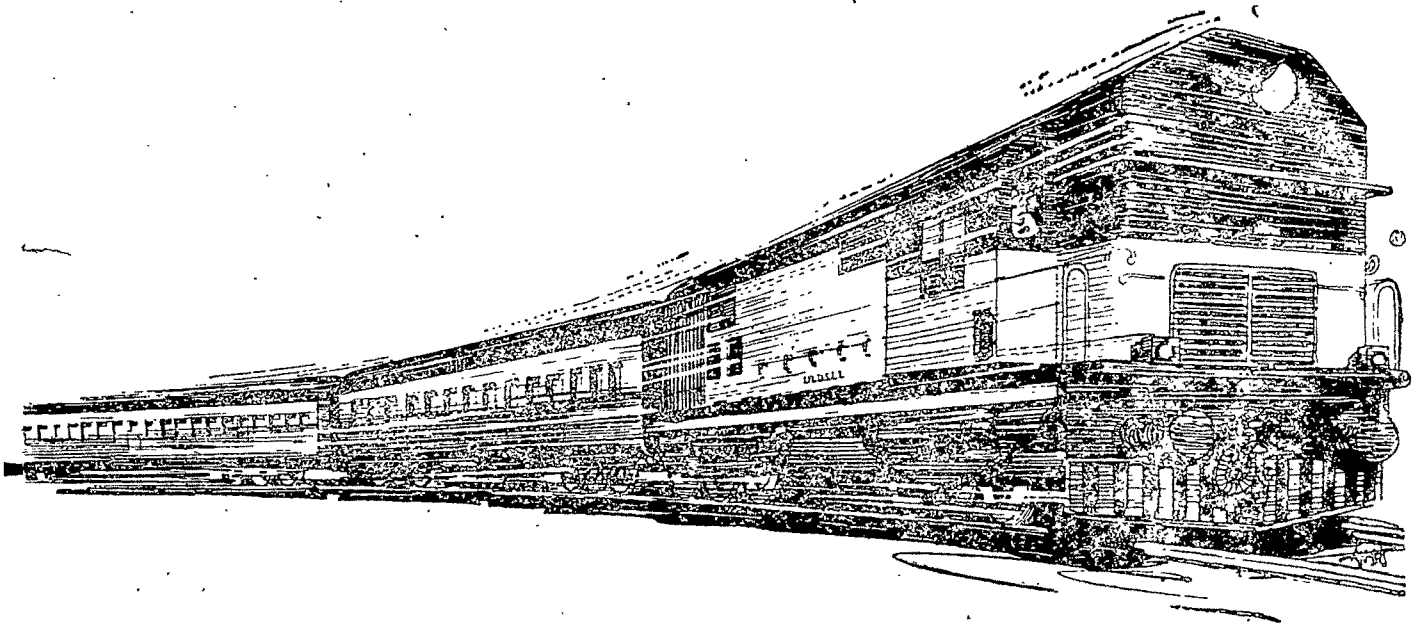
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TYCOONS AND THE PRESS

THE unprecedented strike launched by the employees of the major Big Business newspapers in the country has focussed immediate nationwide attention on the legitimate demand of both the journalist and non-journalist employees of these establishments for the implementation of the wage awards which the Government is committed to enforcing.

But the prolonged and infructuous negotiations between the employees' and employers' organisations in the industry and the inability of the Union Labour Minister to take a firm stand and make the managements see reason also bring out another aspect of the matter: the industrial magnates who own and control the strike-bound newspapers are in a position to bring enormous pressure to bear on the administration in order to thwart the legitimate claims of the employees.

It is not as if the Government has no means of applying pressure on the recalcitrant managements; the latter depended on the Government for various facilities like newsprint and other import licences, and also for a substantial amount of money in the shape of Government and public sector advertisements. So far, however, despite the Labour Minister's admission of both commitment to the awards duly notified by the Government and the utter reasonableness of the employees' representatives, there has not been the least effort on the part of the Government to apply such pressure; on the other hand, there has been an attempt to apply pressure on the employees to give up part of the minimum rates of wages secured by them after long struggle and hard work on the plea that the employers are adamant.

It is clear then that even if a settlement is reached in the current negotiations under the aegis of the Labour Minister, the newspaper employees will have to remain united and carry on their struggle. That the employers are not likely in the near future to get into a reasonable frame of mind is shown by some of the recent developments.

First of all, the Indian and Eastern Newspapers Society, which claims to speak on behalf of the managements, has played the role not of an honest negotiator but of a determined obstructor. Having after much dilly-dallying signed an agreement stipulating that in the case of the non-journalist employees 70 per cent of the difference between the present wages and those due under the award would be paid leaving the balance of 30 per cent to be negotiated further, the spokesmen of the IENS promptly dec-

clared that the agreement was not binding on the employers.

There was no attempt on the part of the IENS to make those of its members who had filed petitions in the courts against the statutory award for working journalists to drop the petitions and reach amicable settlement with the journalist employees: this despite repeated appeals by the Labour Minister and the employees' organisations.

Subsequently, the IENS President dissolved the negotiating committee and took the position that negotiations could only take place at the plant level. The two awards were notified in October and November last year, and there was no reason why the IENS should have come into the picture and pretended to conduct negotiations if this was the position it had decided to take. If at the outset the IENS had made its attitude clear, the employees' organisations would have gone about the whole thing on a different basis and no doubt secured substantial results.

But even more than the effort of the IENS attitude on the negotiations, it is important to note that the Big Business newspaper bosses have a tight grip on the organisation and make use of it to make a number of medium and small newspapers toe their line. It is no secret that among other members of the IENS there is difference of opinion on the attitude

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to be adopted to the question of implementation. A handful of newspapers which presumably valued good relations at the plant level more than the privilege of toeing the line even defied the big newspaper bosses and implemented the awards in consultation with their employees.

The industrialists owning the country's biggest newspapers, be it noted, have a big say in the distribution of advertisements which provide vital revenue for the medium and small newspapers. Things have been so arranged that it is necessary for a newspaper to become a member of the IENS even to be sure that payments of published advertisements will be made within a stipulated period. Small wonder then that the Big Business interests have virtual control of the IENS and a large number of medium and small newspapers are not in a position to defy them, whatever their own feelings. It has to be remembered that these smaller newspapers do not have the same influence with the bureaucracy and the politicians in power, and the goodwill of the Big Brothers is needed to ensure that they are not deprived of the facilities to which they are entitled.

This situation has been growing over the years, and the working journalists' unremitting campaign against the monopoly Press is based on the dangers posed to the free and independent functioning of newspapers by the indirect control exercised by Big Business over large sections of the newspaper industry. The vast resources and ramifications of the Big Business Press make it practically impossible or the bulk of the Indian Press to function freely, especially where the interests of Big Business are involved. It is well known that even the two major national news agencies are controlled by these same

interests, with the inevitable consequences for genuine freedom of the Press in this democracy.

The Government and Parliament have to apply their minds not only to the question of industrial relations in the Press, which is no doubt important, but also to the fundamental question of what kind of Press a democracy like ours should have and what steps should be taken to end the stranglehold of a handful of Big Business houses on the industry. The Press Commission made some gentle suggestions, like diffusion of ownership in various ways, but even those may not be enough in the present situation.

While public opinion generally, and working journalists in particular, will not accept Sri Madhu Limaye's proposal for a Government takeover (which will be an attack on Press freedom from another side) there is no reason why Parliament should not consider (1) revival of the price-page formula by amending the Constitution if necessary, so that the smaller newspapers will not be at the mercy of the big ones; (2) denial of Government and public-sector advertising to the affluent newspapers whose owners have other interests; and (3) steps to change the pattern of ownership of newspapers so that either employees or a representative section of the public hold the bulk of shares in the case of companies or take over in other forms, ensuring minimisation of control by vested interests of the publication of news and views.

Unless Parliament and the Government are prepared to act boldly and with vision the serious imbalances in the newspaper industry which harm democracy cannot be corrected: these may only be accentuated.

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HOW TO TALK TO PEKING ?

THE question of opening talks with China has been engaging the attention of both politicians and Foreign Office authorities for quite sometime.

It came out in the open during the excitement following the news of Moscow's decision to permit Pakistan buy arms from the Soviet Union. A senior Congress MP even quoted Mr Hubert Humphrey's olive-branch statement on the China issue to prove the case for a Sino-Indian dialogue. Newspaper columnists long known for their confirmed pro-American bias, were suddenly found to be arguing that New Delhi should open talks with Peking presumably as a counter-blast to Moscow's growing ties with Rawalpindi. Echoes of this line could be heard in Parliament's Lobbies and Central Hall.

It would however be a mistake to regard this new development as either American-inspired or born out of spite for the Soviet overtures to Pakistan. A definite move has been perceptible in New Delhi for sometime for a detente with Peking. A senior Indian journalist, for instance, dined sometime ago with the Chinese Charge d'Affaires, and obviously they did not exchange mere irrelevant pleasantries. Far from being a Mao fan, he could not possibly have set out on his venture into the semi-quarantined Chinese Embassy at Chanakyapuri without the tacit consent, if not the blessings, of at least some of the high-ups in New Delhi.

Similarly, the political upgrading of the Indian Consulate-

General at Hanoi with the appointment of Dr. Shelvankar to the post has been widely interpreted in the Capital as a serious attempt to probe into Peking's current line of thinking. For Hanoi can provide not only a back-window view of China but opportunities for exchange of views with Peking's envoys at Ho Chi Minh's capital.

These moves indicate that a volume of opinion has been silently growing in New Delhi that considers as irrational the continuation of an angry posture towards China. The heavy drain of Defence expenditure has become an unbearable strain on the economy and this is admitted even by the most conservative elements in the Finance Ministry. In a way this heavy burden is coming in the way of any new policy initiative either at home or abroad.

Besides, the latest Peking strategy of helping and training the Naga rebels has underscored the dangers inherent in a situation of continued hostility with China. This has led many in the Capital to believe that only by opening talks with China could such harassments be stopped.

Obviously, such an unorthodox approach is not easy to push through in the External Affairs Ministry. The no-truck-with-China school has all along held sway there. In fact, the pro-American lobby has so long held that by playing up the China menace, India could succeed in wheedling out massive dollar aid. This line was perfected by Sri Asoka Mehta in the hey-days of

his influence in New Delhi (that is, the first half of 1966). This has persisted for long as the official policy. For instance, Sri Morarji Desai during his Japan tour last August was reported to have harped on India being "a democratic counterweight to Communist China". It is significant that Sri Desai was accompanied by the External Affairs Ministry's policy-planning expert, Sri Jagat Mehta.

This theme was however, missing during Smt. Gandhi's South-east Asian tour this summer, though Left critics in the country felt that her warning about subversion in these countries smacked like what the US has been saying in this region. However, it should be stated in all fairness to her that she has not been talking about India acting as a bulwark against Chinese totalitarianism: in fact, her recent statements have carried much less of the pro-American approach than what she had said during her official visit to the US early in 1966.

The pro-US lobby in New Delhi which has for the last five years been clamouring for a shift in policy towards the US is itself in the doldrums today. This was demonstrated, to their obvious discomfiture, during the last week-end's talks that the US Under-Secretary of State, Mr Katzenbach, held with his opposite number in the Government. Significantly, the US Embassy in New Delhi carried in the current issue of *American Reporter*

a reprint of a two-month old speech by Mr Katzenbach in Washington in which he had advocated better relations with China. (Before Mr Katzenbach, others from official Washington, like Mr Roger Hilsman, had pressed for a Sino-American detente, but very few of New Delhi "experts" took serious notice of these straws in the wind.) The Katzenbach speech, recirculated on the eve of the Indo-US talks in New Delhi, clearly stated that "the military threat posed by Peking can be, and perhaps at times has been, exaggerated". This angle was maintained by him during his confidential talks in the Capital; however, he had to admit that the danger of border skirmishes between the Indian and Chinese troops could not be ignored.

By now, the US lobby in New Delhi seems to have woken up. Instead of the danger from China, their latest theme is the "unreliability" of the Soviet intentions in Asia. They have picked up the latest Soviet readiness to sell arms to Pakistan as "proof of its double-crossing India. And so, the argument runs, India should give up relying on Moscow.

It is to be noted here that the pro-China school in Washington is not just a liberal bunch of Owen Lattimore-like experts with strong sympathies for a regenerated Asian power that China is. It consists of hard-headed military and foreign-policy strategists—some of them seasoned veterans of the Pentagon and the State Department. The dominant consideration before them is how to contain or isolate the Soviet Union; for in their calculations, and rightly so, Moscow with its power, resources and formidable military arsenal poses a much greater threat than Peking. They have thus been watching with keen interest Mao Tse tung's bellicose antics against the Soviet Union. And in their long-range strategy, China does have a place; Mr Katzenbach himself throws a significant hint in the speech referred to earlier in this column:

"But does the United States, through its bilateral and multi-lateral security arrangements with Asian countries, and by the

existence of US bases in Asia, threaten Peking? Does Washington fail to recognise that Peking has legitimate security interests of its own in Asia? It cannot be stressed too strongly, for the information of these leaders, or for that of anyone else who may be interested, that no basis for such a fear exists."

In other words, Mr Katzenbach assures that the ring of US bases and military alliances are not meant to encircle China but the Soviet Union; and he assures that China's "legitimate security interests" are recognised by Washington. With Peking's current war-cries against Moscow, the defence of such "legitimate security interests" can very well mean the joining of a common front against the Soviet Union. Mr Katzebach could not possibly be indulging in mere speculations: at least, he must be knowing what has been going on in the almost never-ending series of Sino-American secret talks at Warsaw.

It is against this background of American global strategy that one has to understand the implications of the present American anxiety to play down Sino-Indian confrontation and to canvass through some of the pro-American elements in this country for opening talks with China. The Asoka Mehta-Jagat Mehta school seems to be slightly out of date with regard to Washington's current line of thinking. This is because Washington's own policy is itself in a melting pot. The tough-liner that President Johnson had been last year was forced early this year to talk of peace in Vietnam. The winning candidate at the November Presidential election is most likely to take the line that is being advocated by the make-up-with-Peking school to which Mr Katzenbach belongs. Already Mr Humphrey has hinted his support for such an approach.

It is therefore clear in New Delhi now that the old line set during the "Hang Krishna Menon" frenzy of 1962 has little validity today, that one cannot possibly expect to get into Washington's favours by magnifying the Chinese menace. More

likely, Washington would soon expect us to talk to China.

This does not mean that New Delhi should refuse to deal with Peking since it may soon be Washington's wish that she should do so. Rather, the initiative for it has to come immediately. The explorations that have begun have to be stepped up: not only in Hanoi, but at other centres as well, such as Paris, Cairo, Warsaw and even nearby Colombo. Roving ambassadors may be appointed to take up the assignment even in Peking: no such effort has been made since Sri R.K. Nehru's visit to China in 1960.

At the same time, it is necessary to make it clear not only to Peking but the world as well that we do not play the American game. Our initiative has to be independent of any other power's world strategy. In this context, New Delhi has to keep Moscow posted about its moves. If Mr Kosygin could keep us posted about his decision on arms supply to Pakistan, it is but natural for him to expect that Smt Gandhi will keep him informed about her decision (whenever it is taken) to open talks with China. No friendly power can take objection to our attempt at detente with an angry neighbour. And the Soviet Union knows perhaps more than anybody else how back-breaking has been the present Defence commitment for this country with her very meagre resources.

As we decide to talk to Peking, it would be childish to think that the opening of talks will automatically lead to settlement of all disputes. For, the items of dispute have accumulated over the years. For one thing, Peking's new policy of helping the tribal peoples on the Indo-Burmese frontiers is a new development. Compared to that, Aksai Chin may prove to be less difficult to settle.

And yet, the very opening of talks can mark a lull in the bitter cold war that has been raging at present. Moreover, it will provide New Delhi with a diplomatic initiative of incalculable value.

July 30

China Watcher

Hurting Ourselves

K. P. KARUNAKARAN

It is a well known fact that during the past few years India had lost her initiative and capacity to manoeuvre in the international field. This is to some extent due to some of the developments in the world scene which are beyond the control of the policy-makers and people of the country. Some developments in India's internal political and economic fields have also been not very helpful in raising the prestige of this country in the world.

It is also a pity that under these hostile circumstances the Government of India has not displayed diplomatic maturity to the extent it is possible for it to do so. And the performances of an irrational, an almost hysterical, section of the extremist Opposition to the Government has not been in any sense conducive to the display of any maturity on the part of the Government.

The present outburst against the proposed Soviet sale of arms to Pakistan is only the latest instance of the attempt of some Opposition leaders to tie the hands of the Government. It remains to be seen whether or not the Government will again function as the prisoner of its extreme critics.

World Realities

The Soviet action in regard to the sale of arms to Pakistan is one of the many international realities which India has to accept whether she approves it or not.

Inside India it is not realised

The author is on the staff of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla.

that the rest of the world does not accept the Indian view on the developments in this sub-continent, but this is nevertheless a fact. Not only the Western Powers, but many Asian, African and East European Governments do not share the Indian view that Pakistan has committed aggression on India and that the Indian case in regard to Kashmir is politically and legally valid.

The Soviet support to India is partly the result of Pakistan's alliance with the US. When this alliance is loosened, one of the reasons for that support is absent.

Another basis of support to India was to disentangle her from the West at the height of the cold war when they were two crystallised power blocs. This situation also does not exist any more.

When the Soviet Union was involved in the civil war and the bloody conflicts in Hungary, it at least wanted to neutralise India. It is doubtful whether any similar development will now take place in spite of what is happening in Czechoslovakia.

On the other hand, at present both the Soviet Union and the US are simultaneously interested in getting India's signature to the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Both are taking a similar stand on the policies to be followed in the Indian sub-continent.

And the Soviet Union is interested in stopping Pakistan's drift towards China.

Under these changing circumstances it is foolish to expect that the Soviet Union's relations with Pakistan will remain static. India

is not in a position to regulate the changes that will take place in the relations between the Soviet Union and Pakistan.

Ideology was never a major factor in Soviet Union's foreign policy. It was once, perhaps, a minor factor. During recent years, its influence was diminishing to the extent of completely disappearing.

When the national interests of the Soviet State demanded that it should militarily help India during her armed conflict with China, Indians welcomed this new trend in Soviet foreign policy. China was not only a communist country but a party to a military treaty with the Soviet Union when the latter gave military and diplomatic support to India against China.

What Indians are now saying is that these trends of the Soviet foreign policy which underlined the decline of the ideology as a factor in it are desirable so long as they are in India's interests, but the Soviet Union has no right to go any further.

Whatever Indians say, the Soviet Union will go further if it is in its interests. And there are reasons to believe that the new trends in the Soviet-Pakistan relations are the result of deliberate calculations on the part of the Soviet Union. They are a part of a new global attitude. It is reflected in Soviet policy towards Iran, Turkey and Thailand. The Soviet calculations may or may not prove to be wrong in the future. But at this stage, the Indian Government and people are not in a position to influence Soviet foreign policy

just because their understanding is different. And we must also not delude ourselves by thinking that the best method of making such an influence on the Soviet Union is by organising irresponsible outbursts and processions in the country or by making the Parliament of India adopt resolutions on this matter.

Repercussions of Outburst

The repercussions of the outburst can only be a widening gap between the Soviet Union and India. Those who are helping this development in India are those who are saying that Pakistan and China will be hostile towards India in the near future. A section among them also want India to explode nuclear weapons and antagonise the Soviet Union and the United States on that ground. Can India at present afford to have simultaneously varying degrees of hostility of China, Pakistan, the Soviet Union and the United States?

The present cordial phase in Pakistan-Soviet relations has not come as a surprise to keen students of international relations, although it has shocked some ill-informed people in this country. Another shock to these people will be administered by China and the US moving closer to each other. There is no doubt that on that occasion these people will protest against those trends of American foreign policy.

If the extremist Opposition in the country and the Government, which is to some extent a prisoner of its critics, are not envisaging the settlement of India's outstanding disputes with Pakistan and China, that is no reason for other countries not to normalise and improve their relations with these countries. Even a mighty United States could not stop the normalisation of relations between China and other Western powers. The Soviet Union cannot prevent cordial relations between West Germany and countries which are very friendly to the Soviet Union. It goes without saying that India cannot stop other countries developing cordial relations with Pakistan and

China.

And our protests against such a development can only harm ourselves. The damage done to India by the proposed sale of Soviet arms to Pakistan is limited. But the damage done by the irresponsible Indian politicians and their followers to Indo-Soviet relations and consequently to India's interests is of a much more serious nature. This is the greatest diplomatic victory for Pakistan.

Those who are hoping that Indian hostility towards the Soviet Union will bring another country closer towards India are asking for the moon. The loss of Soviet friendship will not be compensated by any gain. The United States will not further antagonise China now. It will coordinate its policy with that of the Soviet Union as far as this sub-continent is concerned. And it is not going to support India on Kashmir. There is not even the prospect of getting a raise in American aid. The trend will be towards the reduction of that aid.

Some voice is heard that India must move closer towards Peking. The present writer has always advocated it. But cordiality between the Soviet Union and Pakistan should not be the ground for India to take any step in this direction. It will only

expose India's weakness. Moreover, it will not show any genuine interest on India's part to normalise her relations with China. And unless China is also pressurised by circumstances to change its line towards India, the Government of this country cannot negotiate with China solely on the ground that its relations with the Soviet Union may deteriorate. The matter of normalising India's relations with China should be taken up irrespective of what is happening to the Soviet-Pakistan relations.

The extremist critics of the Indian government are specialising in hurting the interests of this country. The ignorance of international relations is their greatest asset. Cheap popularity is their highest aim. But why should they hold the rest of the country to ransom? Are there not any sane sections of the people in this country who can resist or at least neutralise them? Are not the leaders of the Government aware of international realities? Can they not rebut the arguments of these irresponsible politicians? Cannot the government and the saner sections of the public co-ordinate their activities on this matter?

What is pity if this country of Gandhi has now become totally devoid of mature and balanced political leadership?

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Moscow To Pindi—II

Reversal of Traditional Approach

FIRISHTA

THE Soviet interest and appraisal of the internal set-up in Pakistan have undergone many vicissitudes in the past two decades. It is useful to keep in mind some of the outstanding features of this appraisal.

It may be recalled that recognition of Pakistan by Moscow did not come automatically with the transfer of power. Unlike the case of India, Pakistan got Soviet diplomatic recognition only in 1948. Even in those early days the preponderance of British influence on Pakistan was not at all congenial for any development of Pak-Soviet relations. This was in contrast to the position with regard to India where the national leadership which assumed power, particularly Nehru, had even in the days of the freedom struggle openly recognised Soviet Union as a friend and supporter. This advantage of political rapport the Pakistani leaders from Jinnah onwards did not enjoy in relation to Moscow.

There is a historical background to this lack of understanding between Soviet Union and Pakistan at the beginning. The area out of which Pakistan was carved had always been the springboard for British intrigues into Central Asia. In the early days of the Bolshevik Revolution right up to the thirties all the conspiracies and armed expeditions in support of the reactionary

feudal emirs that the British had tirelessly organised against the new born Soviet State had their headquarters in the northern Punjab and North West Frontier region. And many of these British officials who were enthusiastic supporters of the idea of Pakistan were known for their conspicuous record of anti-Soviet activities and many of them continued to be the unofficial mentors of the new born state of Pakistan. It was therefore legitimate for Stalin and his associates to regard the formation of Pakistan with considerable suspicion in those days.

In the calculations of the British Foreign Office also, the formation of Pakistan was meant to be of help for its own imperialist designs in this part of the world. When the whole of India could not be retained as a British preserve in the face of mass upheaval for freedom which had gathered new momentum at the end of the war, the policy-planners in London calculated that with slicing of a portion of the Indian sub-continent a new set-up under British domination could serve the interest of the West vis-a-vis the Soviet Union, apart from acting as a watch-dog against the rising anti-imperialist nationalism not only in India but in the neighbouring countries such as Afghanistan. In other words, before the Americans stepped in the British policy had calculated to keep Pakistan as a major base of operation in a very important strategic area.

It is part of this long-range policy which led the British to

let Pakistan grab Gilgit which in terms of military planning of those days, had great importance as a strategic base for aerial operations against the Soviet Union. Gilgit today may have lost its pristine importance; even without a base like this, a missile attack on the Soviet Union can be managed from a long-distant range, whether from an aircraft carrier in the Indian Ocean or from bases thousands of miles away in South Arabia. But at the time of Partition, Gilgit's importance in any anti-Soviet strategy can hardly be underestimated, and it was but natural that the British should see to it that Gilgit fell into the hands of Pakistan rather than those of India.

Pakistan's role as a camp-follower of Britain underwent a decisive change in the early years of the fifties. By that time the US came to the scene and it is quite clear that the Americans found in Liaquat Ali Khan a very reliable henchman who would see to it that their influence dominated over Pakistan more than that of the British. The idea of military alliance with America was also finalised under Liaquat Ali Khan and Field Marshal Ayub was at that time a trusted lieutenant for this purpose.

Liaquat Ali Khan's assassination itself is widely suspected in Pakistan as having been brought about by British agents. It is worth noting that the investigation into this murder was hushed up because Pakistani authorities found to their horror the unmistakable evidence of British hand behind the plot. By then, how-

This is the second of the two articles written by a student of Pakistan Affairs. The first one appeared in Mainstream, July 20, 1968.

ever, Britain had lost her grip over Pakistan whose rulers had definitely transferred their primary loyalty to Washington.

It is important to note here that this policy of subservience to America was resented not only by a large section of political opinion in the country such as the Awami League and Maulana Bhasani's movement in East Pakistan, but a very considerable section of the army too. Like the Indian army, the Pakistan army was trained under British auspices. But with Independence it was but natural that many of the senior officers, were touched with the infection of freedom. Besides, the heroic achievements of the Red Army during World War II, had a tremendous impact on the armed forces of all the Afro-Asian countries from Indonesia to Egypt. So when the officers corps found that the political leadership of the country was getting itself committed to a policy of confrontation with the Soviet Union at the behest of America, there was considerable resentment. To clean up this patriotic group which had a definitely friendly attitude towards the Soviet Union, the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case was launched by Liaquat Ali Khan's government, and some of the top-most officers of the Pakistani armed forces were imprisoned as a result of this case. This was in classical American style: after a political coup there was bound to be mopping-up operations both in civil service and in the armed forces.

The Rawalpindi case is actually an index of the weakness of Pakistan's pro-American policy. Although these officers were sent to prison, the fact that such outstanding leaders of the armed forces were involved in what was described as a Red plot, did not add to the political strength of the Government and it brought out for the first time the weak mass base of the new policy of subservience to US.

After that, step by step the inevitable followed. As President Ayub has clearly come out in his political autobiography *Friends, Not Masters*, the erosion of parliamentary system was has-

tened and a fullfledged military dictatorship was set up towards the end of the fifties. Internally it appeared that the policy of total collaboration with America had reached the point of climax.

In this period naturally, the Soviet influence in Pakistan was at its lowest ebb. The Americans practically ran the show. The Rawalpindi Case itself was the beginning of an anti-Soviet phase. In turn, Moscow also had to take a firm attitude towards Pakistan Government. This was seen not only in the definite commitment that Khrushchev made on the issue of Kashmir but also in the manner in which Pakistan envoys were often put into embarrassment in Moscow. In the UN also, Pakistan was treated by the Communist bloc as very much under American subservience.

In this context it is interesting to note how the Soviet Union came out practically in open support of the Pakhtoon movement. In other words, the prospects of disintegration of a part of Pakistan was not regarded at that time by Moscow as something unwelcome.

There was very good ground for such a stand on Moscow's part; because it is about this time that Pakistan converted herself into a fullfledged military base against Soviet Union. The U-2 incident revealed the extent of this commitment on Pakistan's part, since Gary Powers took off in 1960 from the American air base near Peshawar. The angry reaction of the Soviet Government to this development was understandable and not unexpected.

In a sense the U-2 incident may be considered as marking an important dividing line in Pakistan's foreign policy. The potential of continuing American influence was getting worn out and by that time, that is 1960, the power balance in the region had also undergone a change. The Chinese confrontation against India, the American discredit in Vietnam had already begun while Pakistan found itself to her cost to have alienated Moscow.

It is about this time after a good deal of home work Presi-

dent Ayub set out on the adventures of a new foreign policy whose first round was marked by overtures and entente with Peking. The flirtation with Peking were useful in two ways. Apart from actually securing some military hardware and certain trade opening, Rawalpindi could bargain with Washington for aid. This was the first sign that the old monolith of Dulles network of military alliances was cracking up; and this process started in Pakistan chronologically earlier than de Gaulle's revolt against NATO. The old understanding of political observers that a subservient partner in a military alliance could have no bargaining capacity in international relationship no longer held good atleast so far as Asia is concerned; since Pakistan's example showed that American military alliances were on the point of cracking up. This process was stepped up later on not only by the Chinese overtures but also by the fact of world-wide discredit of the American foreign policy whose climax was reached in Vietnam; and it was over Vietnam that Pakistan had shown its definite refusal to sign on the dotted line in favour of Washington.

The phase of Sino-Pak entente synchronises with the growing bellicosity against India. Its high watermark was reached in the autumn of 1965 when Pakistan's planned infiltration into Kashmir finally ended up in a regular war with India. The Indo-Pak conflict

(Continued on Page 38)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In last week's Mainstream (July 27), the article, "Class Struggles in France" was received from a Mainstream reader who preferred to remain anonymous using the pen-name of Observer. It was later found that the paper had been prepared by the Research and Education Department of CPI.

The Editor was not informed of this when he received it from Observer.

Three-Language Formula in Education

GOPAL HALDAR

AFTER about the fifteen years of chequered history the Three-Language Formula appears to be coming into favour in our public education. The Education Commission recommended it in their report, and the Union Cabinet has just now put its seal of approval to it as a part of the new Education Policy.

The implementation of the formula and generally the policy is to be left, rightly and naturally, to the States. Nobody can say that the time and toil, not to speak of the money, spent in this performance, has been small.

But with all that, we are now where we were before in respect of the Formula. So, there is no reason to think that we have heard the last of it. For, the Three-Language Formula has been with us so long, and the States which did not find it all to their taste may not find that so even now unless the formula, its meaning and scope, are clearly apprehended; and, the States also show some flexibility of mind, sense of reality, and concern for educational interests.

Educational Interests

Let us be clear on this point: in the field of education, educational interests should be the first concern; and the wider and deeper interests of the Indian unity and of the progressive development of the multi-lingual Indian culture can never be opposed to the true demands of

education. It is overdue to recognize the fundamental principle which should underlie our Educational Policy—whatever be its actual proposals.

Our education, in the multi-lingual position of our country, should be first, *national in form*, which means that (a) the national languages, or the Regional Languages, if you prefer to call them so, should generally be the principal medium of education all through, with (b) subsidiary language or languages, to assist the medium language for limited purposes, educational or otherwise, as necessary; for instance, for science and technological studies, or for pan-Indian purposes and international contacts.

Educational Needs

Secondly, our education must be *modern and progressive in content* which means we must rear up our students as builders of modern and progressive India and as creators of a Scientific and Socialistic Culture. In no case education should yield to parochial and linguistic zeal or "zealotry", if you allow me to coin that word. The Three-Language Formula, I take it, is conceived in that modern spirit; and, it has to be implemented in that spirit too—to serve the ends of modern progressive education and to create a democratic intelligentsia.

Let us, at the risk of over-elaboration, clear the deck in the beginning, and, first, be sure about the meaning and scope of the Three Language Formula for our educational purposes.

First then is the question: Are not three languages too many for students to learn? My answer is

to point to you and us. We are the living results of a three language system, namely, English, mother-tongue and a classical language; and I for myself hold that it was not wrong in itself, but its priorities and emphasis were wrong. I know also that the new generation of our students are neither less capable than we, nor less clever than European students of some countries who have to read three languages. In fact the question can be properly answered if we are sure what exactly are our educational needs. For, learning languages is no end in itself at least for the general body of students. The need *par excellence* for a student at primary and secondary stages is to acquire the knowledge and information essential for a future citizen of India. One Language, the 'First Language', must form an essential part of it, but not more languages necessarily.

First, we must then decide what *amount of minimum essential knowledge and information has to be imparted to our students*, stage by stage, that is, during the primary, secondary and higher stages, keeping in view the purpose of each stage and the end as a whole namely, creation of a democratic progressive intelligentsia.

Knowing a Language

Secondly, we must know what knowing a language means, and be sure how much of a language has to be known to serve as a tool for acquiring the definite body of knowledge and information at each particular stage, primary, secondary and higher.

To know a language *well*, we should remember, is to pass the

This contribution by the distinguished Bengali intellectual was presented at the Seminar on the Language problem organised by the Bihar Citizen's Council of Education held in Patna on July 25-28, 1968.

four-fold criteria: (a) to understand as one reads it; (b) and as one hears it spoken; (c) to be understandable by others when one reads it, and (d) when one speaks it oneself. If proficiency is demanded in all four respects a student of average intelligence can possibly acquire that in his 12 years of schooling (taking 10 years as the school stage, or 10 plus 2 if you like) only in one language, that is either in his mother tongue or in the Regional Language which he has heard spoken around him from his infancy, or the foreign language which he has "adopted" as his own for some reason or other. If it be 10 plus 2 years, I agree an intelligent student can manage to learn fairly two languages, but three only at the cost of non-language subjects, that is, lightening the load of the body of essential knowledge. I take it, however, that the Three-Language Formula does not demand that, nor does it demand that all three languages have to be equally learnt by an ordinary student in 10 or even 12 years. Nor do the interests of education require that.

Different Ends and Uses

Educational interests will be served if the Formula means, as I take it, that (1) the student's own language is to be the First Language; it will generally be the mother-tongue or the regional language. I am discussing the question *generally* here—The First Language is intended to be *the main medium of education as well as of expression*. So it has to be *learnt well* in all four ways; and taught all along. I hold that as it is to be the language of expression too, at least the students of humanities should read it even at their first degree course.

(2) Another language, the Second Language (by 'Library Language' the Commission appears to mean nothing else), comes later. I hold that in the present state of the development of our national Language and in view as well of the increasing demands of modern times, politically, socially, commercially and culturally on the intelligentsia of

every country, this Second Language has to be learnt *tolerably well* within 10-12 years period to enable the student to understand it, though not to write it. The Second Language is mainly to be a 'tool language' to assist the First Language; and is not generally to serve as the Language of expression though, it may have to serve as a language of communication for limited purpose.

(3) The Third Language to come last is to be a selective language. For special purposes, a 'working knowledge' of it alone should be demanded. The 10-year period should lay a basis which should be capable of expansion later in life according to necessities.

Personally I hold that for educational purposes the mother-tongue or the regional language must be the First Language of a student, and the *medium of all education*. (The problem of the speakers of minority languages will undoubtedly call for special consideration and for necessary adjustments with their agreement). English in my opinion is to remain the Second Language as I conceive it; for it alone can act in the present state as the main 'tool language' for educational and other purposes until any Indian Language develops and comes to be as helpful in these respects as English. I would concede to Hindi in particular the status as an alternative second language. But that day still appears to be distant (both for internal and external reasons), when Hindi will be able to fulfil the function satisfactorily. For Indian students in general, I believe Hindi will be *par excellence*, the Third language though the Third Language has to be a selective Language that is, selected out of alternative groups. The groups should be like this :

Group A : One Modern Indian Language (of course other than the First and the Second Languages), preferably North-Indian Language for the students of South, and a South Indian Language for the students of North.

Or

Group B : One Indian

Classical Language, Sanskrit or Old Tamil or Persian. In view of the importance of these Classical Languages I should like a provision to be made that students of humanities can take one of them at least as an additional and/or optional Language.

Link Language in the Making

Perhaps to make the position clearer, I should deal with the question of the 'Link Language'. I do not know if it is a term used to imply what the word "Rastra-bhasa" did formerly—with the latter's 'superiority complex' blunted. While everybody desires that India should have a 'Link Language', and, I do so most strongly, I find that people are by no means sure what are the specific functions that Link Language is required to do today and tomorrow, for, the educated—and they are preponderantly English educated—do have a Link Language still; it is English, which links them not only with their fellow-countrymen speaking different languages of India, but links them up also with the larger world of culture and politics, social interchanges, trade and commerce. Of course, the English educated constitute only two percent of the population; but we shall always need that minimum two percent of cultural elite if we are not to be isolated from the world of science and culture. What, however, we require is a *popular link language* a language which has to act as a link between the different peoples of this multi-lingual and multi-national country speaking different tongues, serve them at the level of popular communication, parlance and exchange. It must be such as is easy to learn by the common man of India.

There is no such link language at present, no doubt. But there is one already in the making. No, it is not English. It is in the process of taking shape in the industrial centres like Bombay, Calcutta, Jamshedpur etc. It is spreading itself through 'Film Hindi' and, in spite of the onslaughts of the Akashvani

High Hindi, it is also spreading through Radio-Hindi : I am definite that this 'Link Language-to-be' is to grow along with industrialization, economic development, cultural advance of the masses based on compulsory primary education, and with the inevitable development of inter-communication of our people because of the development of their communication links (Film, Radio-broadcasting, dance-drama) and transport facilities (railways, motorways, etc., to mention only a few). This popular link language which is emerging is a variety of simplified popular Hindi, simplified by the people themselves. It is distinct from *Parinisthit* Hindi (High Hindi) and Urdu. It is rather closer to Hindustani. But it will accept in future less of the Persianised vocabulary of Hindusthani and more of the *Tadbhava* and suitable *deshi* words that are current in the non-Hindusthani areas. This speech is rightly called *Chalu Hindi*; and, it is in normal course developing into a popular link language; and, from this stage in course of some decades, it can grow into the popularly accepted workable language of commercial, social and political communication. Until then, as now, English is to remain as the first cultural, political, social link language; the other languages, regional and of limited use, like Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Tamil, etc. will continue also to act so in certain zones, Northern India, Eastern India, Southern India, etc.

For our present purpose, we need not be bogged here in the question of link language; though I should like to make it clear in this connection that only the language which the *maximum number of the people of India can learn with minimum efforts* can be the link language of the Indian people, and this is bound to be a variety of simple Hindi, that is, *Chalu Hindi*, not any other Indian language, nor English.

Let us now turn to the question of the implementation of the Three-Language Formula, and, if you bear with me I shall

prior to that make some observation on what has been called a 'priority' now. Free and compulsory primary education for all and the removal of illiteracy are, I want to emphasise, the first duties of any modern state, and should be the first item in any educational programme. Unfortunately even the Constitutional recommendation with regard to this has been given a go-bye by the ruling classes of India. The emphasis was on purpose shifted successfully from the question of primary education to comparatively remoter issues, like, for example, whether M.Sc. physics should be taught in the regional languages or in English or Hindi. I have a strong feeling against this sort of diversionary tactics on the part of our ruling class, and even in spite of the latest Education policy declaring priority for primary education, I hold that giving free and compulsory primary education to each and every child (between the age of 5 and 11, if not 14) is far more urgent than spending some crores of rupees for hurried and indifferent translations of text books of higher Chemistry, Physics, Geography, etc. in Hindi or any regional language. Particularly so, when we know we cannot do the two things simultaneously; we have not enough money nor enough responsible men for both.

Stages and Steps in Implementation

Turning to the practical measures for implementation of the Three-Language Formula, we may suggest the broad outline for the general education for 10-plus-2 years, stage after stage, in the light of the recent recommendations about those stages and the subjects of study.

Primary Education : Classes I to VI-Primary education, both lower (4) and higher (2), it is held by all, should be imparted in the scholar's own language, that is, mother-tongue, or where for some reason or other that is not possible (as in the case of small tribal peoples with an undeveloped mother-tongue), the regional language (even when

that is not strictly the mother-tongue of the majority) is to be the medium; as already indicated, the essential minimum knowledge and information that a citizen must possess should be ascertained first and imparted at this stage in definite and graded measures (in first 4-plus-2, lower and higher primary years of schooling); and the total available hours of study be distributed, year by year, subject-wise first, namely, the subjects being the First Language, Mathematics, Elementary Science (including agriculture and hygiene) and Social studies (including geography, history and civics). It is to be borne in mind that most of the primary educated pupils in our present conditions are bound to live and work in their own respective States. It is unnecessary to cut down reading hours from their essential studies in order to teach them another language, be it English or Hindi, of which they will have little use. English or Hindi or the regional language (the last for those who did not have it in I to IV classes) may be read as an *additional subject* in Classes V and VI to enable the pupils who want to go beyond the Primary stage to be prepared for that. Such study in those two years need not go beyond learning the basic words, say the first 2000 of selected words and simplest sentences made of them. In no case, a Second Language should be made compulsory, and its study at the Primary stage (V and VI) mean a cut in the essential studies among which the First Language is of course included.

Secondary Education of 2 (Lower) plus 2 (High) plus 2 (Higher) years. It need not be repeated that the volume of knowledge (including that of the First Language) for the entire period, and for each sub-stage, should be decided and school-hours for each distributed accordingly. Knowledge is the prerequisite objective and study of the 'tool languages' must be subordinated to that. Subject to this general rule, the study of the Second Language as a compulsory language is to begin from

the start (that is, from V) and to continue till Class X (and class XII too, though *optionally* in class XI and XII for some 'streams' that is, Vocational, mechanical, etc). At the first sub-stage (VII-VIII) a 'working knowledge' of the Second Language should be demanded which should be good enough for those who step off in other directions; at the same time which is to prove for those who continue in Classes IX and X good enough to grow into a 'tolerably useful knowledge'. It means that at the end of Class X, the pupil will be able to read say a daily paper in English, and a simple book and a book in his own line. Written composition should not be demanded, except for writing simple 'business English'. In the Classes XI to XII, this foundation should be strengthened for all purposes, to maintain national and international cultural contacts in particular.

The Third Language should be introduced at Class IX. Personally, I plead for wide option in the matter, it being agreed that we shall demand only a 'working knowledge' of the Third Language in the two years of Classes IX and X, whether that Third Language be a modern Indian Language or a Classical Indian Language, does not matter. An alternation in this respect may be allowed taking the IX to XII classes as a whole, namely, those who read a Modern Indian Language in IX and X may be allowed to drop it and read a Classical Language, in Classes XI and XII, and *vice versa*.

A pupil is, however, not to be compelled to read more than three languages together at any time, except the Language students at the University stage, which I shall explain presently.

University Education

First Degree Stage : (20 years) for Pass plus one year Honours. As far as the study of Languages go, I insist that students of humanities in Universities at this stage (Pass) should take a compulsory paper in the First Language.

Other students (Science, Technology, etc.) may take that or a paper in any other language suitable for their own line as an *additional* language. The general medium of University education should be the First Language that is, the regional language.

Modern Language Faculty :

An exception may have to be made for Language Faculty students, as already suggested. The Faculty, a new one, is specially called for, I am convinced, by the peculiar situation and position of our country. We are a multi-lingual people, and, now with emphasis being laid on regional languages, we require translators and interpreters first of all for intra-Indian intercourse; secondly, we require them equally now as a free people to conduct our international relations, business, tourist trade, etc. etc. We suggest, therefore, Institutes of Languages for Post-Graduate and research purposes, and, prior to that, a Modern Language Faculty in the Universities including some Groups: Indian Language group, Asian Language groups, European Language group and so on. Four Languages

only are to be studied in the First Degree Course by such language students who are not to read other subjects. The curriculum and syllabus would not be difficult to draw up. The point is to realise that we Indians cannot do without our teams of interpreters, translators, etc. even for our own purposes.

In conclusion, let us understand that overemphasis on English at the cost of our national languages was a national waste. But a total disregard of an incomparable serviceable 'tool language' for admission into the world of modern science and culture—and in our circumstances that can be given only by English—cannot make good that loss. It is not beyond our intelligence to know how to make English serve us rather than dominate us; and the Three-Language—making the regional language the general medium for all education, English the main 'tool language' or the Second Language; and a 'working knowledge' of an Indian language, modern or classical, a necessary additional equipment in the multi-lingual Indian world.

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CPI and Jana Sangh

SATYAPAL DANG

FROM time to time there have appeared articles in *Mainstream* containing criticism of the Communist Party of India (CPI) for having joined the Jana Sangh in the united fronts, thereby giving it respectability. Now an article on this very theme by C. N. Chitta Ranjan has appeared in the issue dated July 13, 1968.

Any party which does not want to remain a small, ginger group and is serious to win the support of the majority of the people must welcome criticism from all quarters and especially from friendly quarters. At the same time, when this criticism—wholly or in part—is based on misunderstandings, the same must be clarified.

C. N. Chitta Ranjan writes in his article: "The truth is that in the period before the Fourth General Election, when the 'anti-Congress' sentiment was at fever pitch, the CPI did not think it wise to be left out of the Fronts formed on that basis, and accepted alliance with the Jana Sangh and other such organizations as a necessary evil for the purpose of ending the Congress monopoly of power. At that time the CPI preferred discretion to valour and considered such alliance a tactical necessity".

It must be stated that the above criticism is not warranted by facts. Neither the line worked out in relation to the General Election nor the actual practice of the CPI in connection with the same can justify it. The CPI, no

doubt, was keen to end the monopoly of power held by the Congress. But for this purpose it wanted to forge an alliance or Front of Left and democratic parties on the basis of a minimum programme. It did *not* advocate an alliance with Jana Sangh. On the contrary, one of its objectives was to rout—at least to weaken to the maximum extent possible—the parties of Right reaction. The CPI was one party that refused to be carried away by anti-Congress sentiments. In fact, while voicing its strong opposition to the Congress, it warned other Left and democratic parties as also the people at large against blind anti-Congressism. The CPI wanted a Left and democratic alternative to emerge and was against any alliances with Jana Sangh and similar other parties.

The CPI made serious efforts to ensure the success of its line in actual practice. It took initiative to convene meetings of Left parties and groups and did all it could to forge a front of Left and democratic parties on the basis of a minimum programme. Unfortunately the other All-India Left parties took a negative attitude. The SSP was for an all-in anti-Congress alliance from Communists to Jana Sangh and would not even discuss a minimum programme. The Communist Party (Marxist) too took a negative attitude. It wanted adjustment of seats between all anti-Congress parties to defeat the Congress. It wanted

a united front on the basis of minimum programme only in a State in which according to its assessment an alternative government was possible. A powerful section of this party was more keen to see CPI routed than anything else. Even apart from that, the CP(M) was at that time nearer to the SSP position than to the position of the CPI. The PSP believed in the theory of equidistance (from Congress and the Communists) and had strong anti-Communist prejudices.

The CPI took the issue to the masses at least to some extent. When it became clear that a programme-based All-India front of Left and democratic parties was not possible, the CPI decided to work for similar fronts on State basis in as many States as possible. In no State did the CPI work for or accept an alliance of all anti-Congress forces including Jana Sangh. The CPI, unfortunately did not succeed in its objective except in Kerala thanks to the attitude of other Left parties and also to the inability of the CPI to generate sufficient pressure in support of its viewpoint. However, it did campaign against blind anti-Congressism to some extent at least, and it was because of this that certain other Left parties criticised and even attacked us as being "pro-Congress". The above cited criticism of C. N. Chitta Ranjan is thus uncharitable, to say the least.

While dealing with the period

before the General Election, another important aspect needs to be mentioned. The CPI was not only against any alliance with Jana Sangh but was for a policy of having 'no truck' with it at all. But when SSP in States like UP and Bihar persisted in its policy of having alliances or adjustments with all, including Jana Sangh on the basis of negative anti-Congressism, what attitude should the CPI have adopted towards SSP etc.? Should the CPI have told the SSP: "Since you do not agree to have no truck with the Jana Sangh, CPI will have no truck with you and will go it alone." Or, should the CPI have had adjustments with the SSP etc. despite their blind anti-Congressism? The CPI adopted the latter course and I think rightly. But surely this did not mean "accepting alliance with the Jana Sangh." Nowhere did CPI ally itself with the Jana Sangh or call for support to it.

Situation After Election

Let us now examine the situation as it arose immediately after the General Election. In States like Punjab and Bihar life posed a complicated problem before the CPI. The Congress had failed to get a majority of the seats in the legislatures. On the other hand, neither the Left and democratic parties together were in a position to form Government nor the other parties. Among the mass of the people there were very strong anti-Congress sentiments. People wanted and demanded that all non-Congress parties should get together and form Governments to prevent Congress from winning over some MLA, to be in a majority and then forming Government again thereby flouting and nullifying the verdict of the people. This sentiment and demand arose because of twenty years' experience of Congress rule. CPI had tried to expose the reactionary nature of anti-Congressism of the Jana Sangh and other reactionary parties, but that was not enough. The Bihar Jana Sangh at first took the stand that it would not join hands with the Communists to form the Ministry and would

instead support a Congress Ministry. This created violent reaction against the Jana Sangh and its All-India leadership, had to step in and reverse the stand.

Principled Manner

If the CPI had taken the stand that it would not form any front that included the Jana Sangh in these Assemblies and would not cooperate in forming non-Congress Ministries for the same reason, there is hardly any doubt about the results. The Congress would have succeeded in forming the Ministries in these States, the CPI would have been held responsible for the same and this would have led to the isolation of the CPI. It would have put the Jana Sangh and other reactionaries in a better position and even strengthened them. The CPI rightly did not adopt this course. It took into account its principles as well as the consciousness of the masses at that time. It realised that a situation had been created—despite its efforts to the contrary—in which propaganda alone was not enough to get its viewpoint accepted, that people had to be led through actual experience and helped to see the vital difference between the Left and democratic opposition to the Congress on the one hand and reactionary opposition on the other. It therefore agreed to join fronts of all non-Congress parties *but only on the basis of mutually agreed minimum programmes*. In formulating these programmes, the CPI did not compromise any of its basic stands. The CPI was conscious that sharp differences would arise while steps were taken actually to implement these programmes. When these differences did arise—whether on the question of bataidars in Bihar or over minimum wages in Punjab or an attitude towards the Muslim minority in Bihar and UP, the CPI did not give up its position to 'somehow' remain in the ministries. On the contrary, it took the differences to the people in a principled manner so that they could learn the reactionary character of anti-Congressism of the Jana Sangh

etc. on the basis of their actual experience.

For similar reasons, the CPI had joined the all-inclusive non-Congress front in UP Assembly and also the non-Congress Ministries and followed the same line as in Punjab and Bihar.

This is not to claim that there was no mistake or deviation; but in the main the practice of the CPI helped greater realisation amongst the people about the need of a Left and democratic alternative, about the sterility of blind anti-Congressism and about the real character of the Jana Sangh etc.

Differentiation Checked

The process was checked by the way the Congress brought about the fall of the Punjab and Bihar Ministries. The differentiation that was taking place between the parties of the Right, and the Left was checked. In Punjab the Front has continued to demand the dismissal of the Gill Ministry and mid-term election. This however has not prevented the CPI from telling the people that it has basic differences with the Jana Sangh and would therefore not be in a position to support the Jana Sangh candidate for Lok Sabha during bye-election from Hoshiarpur Parliamentary constituency.

Criticism has been made that the policy of forming non-Congress Ministries including Jana Sangh has given the latter some respectability which it did not have before; and has enabled it to misuse its power to place its own men in important positions in the administration. This might be correct to a certain extent in case of all the States in which Jana Sangh shared power with the CPI. Let us assume for the sake of argument that it might also be correct that not enough vigilance was exercised in this respect by the CPI and other Left and democratic forces. But is this the only reality? Take for instance Punjab. On the question of State trading in foodgrains, on the question of States of Punjabi language, etc. Jana Sangh had to make a complete left about turn and this was duly noted by the people. It is

too hasty a judgement that it is the Jana Sangh that has gained most out of all-in non-Congress Governments in some States. Moreover, one has to compare the results of the policy and practice of the CPI not with some hypothetical situations but the concrete situation as it existed and with the results that would have followed from the other alternative open to the CPI. This alternative would have led people to hold CPI responsible for the Congress coming back to power despite its defeat. It would not have weakened the Jana Sangh but would have weakened and isolated the CPI.

Temporary Phenomenon

The CPI is quite clear that parties like the Jana Sangh will have no place in the National Democratic Front that the CPI wishes to build for a state of national democracy in India and that CPI being in the same Ministries as the Jana Sangh was a temporary phenomenon warranted by a concrete situation.

C. N. Chitta Ranjan writes: "While the CPI need not accept the extremist Naxalbari thesis of rejecting parliamentary democracy, it need not also go to the other extreme of seeking somehow to get into Ministries."

The criticism is entirely unwarranted. This is proved by a number of facts. Here are some.

In Punjab, the CPI at first decided not to join the Ministry but to let other non-Congress parties form one with its support. It was forced to change this stand by the common people, by their negative reaction to our original decision.

In Punjab, in Bihar as well as in the UP, CPI did not give up its basic stand and insisted on the implementation of the minimum programmes knowing fully well that this would lead to sharp differences and break-up of all-in non-Congress fronts and their Ministries.

In UP the CPI did not hesitate to ask its Ministers to quit when it found that they could not influence the work of the Government in a substantial manner at least, and when the public opinion would not misunderstand this

action of the CPI as helping the Congress.

All this does not show that CPI somehow wanted to get into the Ministries.

C. N. Chitta Ranjan adds: "The CPI's task in Parliament and the Legislatures is important no doubt, but its work outside parliamentary institutions is even more important. This is true of every Leftist party in the country."

This is quite correct; CPI not only agrees with this in theory but has been trying to act accordingly. The initiatives it has taken recently to revive the peasant movement in the country, to organise the tribal people, to hold an All-India Conference of agricultural labourers, etc. should have convinced Sri Chitta Ranjan that CPI is taking its work outside the legislatures seriously and does not sacrifice it for the sake of or subordinate it to its work in the Parliament and Legislatures.

The question that remains is: What Next? Chitta Ranjan writes: "Sri Rao claims that in Bihar the CPI has been able to expose the Sangh's links with landlords and black-marketeers. Having so exposed the Sangh,

why does Sri Rao feel unable to say categorically and without qualifications that his party will have no truck with the communal, reactionary organizations in any circumstances?"

The CPI has stated categorically—both in UP and in Bihar—that it will have no truck with the Jana Sangh and will work for the formation of anti-Congress and anti-Jana Sangh fronts consisting of Left and democratic parties and groups for the coming mid-term elections in the two States.

Whether the CPI will succeed in this or not will not depend upon it alone. What CPI will do after the mid-term elections in these States or in Punjab when mid-term elections are ordered there will depend upon the concrete situation at the relevant time—balance of forces, sentiment and consciousness of the people, the stand of other Left and democratic parties, etc. One thing however is quite certain. It will not decide its course with a view to somehow get into Ministries. It will choose that alternative out of the ones available that will be most conducive to further raise the political consciousness of the people.

Jana Sangh members protested in Parliament when Food Minister, Sri Jagjivan Ram, referred to scholars who claimed that beef was eaten in ancient India.

To acquaint yourself with the attitude of our forefathers on the subject of beef-eating, read this book by a distinguished indologist of the nineteenth century.

Beef In Ancient India

by

RAJA RAJENDRALALA MITRA

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RSS and Jana Sangh: A Study in Ideology

K. L. KAMAL

OBSERVERS of the Indian political scene seem to realise that the Jana Sangh has undergone a radical change, particularly after the Fourth General Election. And it is said that Prof. Balraj Madhok's Presidential Address at the 13th Session of the Sangh held at Jullundur on April 30, 1966 constituted a significant departure from the traditional pattern. Prof. Madhok talked of politics of realism and wanted his party to join hands with other democratic parties including the Congress and thus convert the Jana Sangh into a respectable national party. The recognition of the need of English for the non-Hindi speaking people by the Calicut Session of the Party towards the end of 1967 was said to be yet another significant step indicative of its emerging policy free from the RSS influence.

The association of the Jana Sangh with anti-Congress parties, both of the Right and the Left and its proclaimed adherence to a common programme seemed to create a new stir. Many other emerging trends in the Jana Sangh politics seem to convince the students of Indian politics that "politically, the Jana Sangh of the future is not likely to resemble Golwalkar's Hinduised version of it. The Jana Sangh will be cut into a different shape by the mighty knocks of political and economic compulsions from which it was so long spared by lack of any opportunity to sharing of power. The inner durabi-

lity of the RSS is likely to slough off the mask of Hindu forbearance which it has genuinely put on as the only way of capturing power..." (Brij Mohan Toofan, *Mainstream*, April 20, 1968, p11.)

It may, however, not be denied that compulsions of the situation bring a change in the politics of a party but the Jana Sangh has not changed much. It is not difficult to show that the Jana Sangh continues to be the political arm of the RSS and the latter constitutes the main ideological plank on which stands the entire structure of the former.

A study of the RSS chief, M.S. Golwalkar's books like "*We or our nationhood defined, Not Socialism but Hindu Rashtra, Vichar Darshan*" reveal their impact on the entire Jana Sangh literature including its election manifestoes, policy statements etc.

According to Golwalkar, there are many requisites for a nation. The first is that a nation is a contiguous piece of land delimited, as far as possible, by natural boundaries to serve as the substratum, as the solid basis on which the nation has to live, grow and prosper.

The second requisite is love for that particular territory. The people living in that territory should have developed an attachment for that land, a love and regard for it as their motherland, as the place of their sustenance, their security and their prosperity.

Thirdly, these people who constitute this nation should have a certain definite course of life which is developed by their common feelings, common emotions, common sentiments, common faith and common traditions.

The people must have common aspirations, common memory of the good and the evil of life which they might have experienced. The feelings of friendship or hostility towards people, who might have behaved towards them as friends or foes, should also be the same and, in brief, the people must have the realisation that their interests are intertwined and that they are one and identical.

Eka Matrubbhoomi, putrarupa samaj with samana samskriti, samana parampara, samana adarsha, samana shraddha, samana sukha dukha smriti, samana hita—sambandha, samana shatru mitra bhavana, samana asha akenksha. (M. S. Golwalkar, *Why Hindu Rashtra*, Prakashana Vibhaga, Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, Keshvakripa - Seshedripuram, Bangalore—20, p. 4)

The thinking of the RSS leader is that 'all the requisites for the making of a full-fledged national life are thus fulfilled in the life of this great Hindu people. Therefore, we say that in this land of ours, Bharat, the Rashtra Jeewan is of the Hindu samaj. In short, Bhartiya Rashtra is Hindu Rashtra...Historically, this is a Hindu Rashtra, which has been existing here from very ancient times. Hence freedom of the land of Bharat is the freedom of the Hindu Rashtra. Prosperity of Bharat means establishment of Hindu Rashtra in the world as a respectable entity'. (M.S. Golwalkar, op. cit., p 21)

Non-Hindus, — particularly Muslims and Christians—argues Golwalkar, are incapable of having any love for this land'. (Golwalkar : *Not Socialism but*

The author is the University Lecturer in Political Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

Hindu Rashtra). 'They came as invaders to destroy us and to establish their own supremacy... and to enslave the local people.'

Golwalkar's Conclusions

This leads the RSS leader to conclude that the real national work is that which is done for furthering the cause of the Hindus. Only the Hindus are a reality in this country. 'All others, posing to be patriots and wilfully indulging in a course of action detrimental to the Hindu nation are traitors and enemies to the national cause or to take a charitable view, if unintentionally and unwillingly led into such a course, mere simpletons, misguided ignorant fools'. *Golwalkar: We or Our Nationhood Defined*, p 49).

He is critical of the fact that Fundamental Rights have been given to all in the Republican Constitution of India. 'Unfortunately in our country', says Golwalkar, 'our Constitution has equated the children of the soil with the aggressor, and given equal rights to everybody, just as a person without understanding may give equal rights to his children, to the thieves in his house and distribute property among all. That has happened in our country now. Same rights to the aggressor, same rights to the children of the soil'.....if we look at things with an eye upon the historical truth, we have to say the children of this motherland are the Hindus only'. (*Golwalkar : op. cit* p 18).

These ideas find full expression in the Jana Sangh literature. It can be stated at the very outset that the Jana Sangh stands for Bhartiya Samskriti and Maryada. Since the formation of the party in 1951, there has been no change in its basic ideological stand. The following two important extracts, one from Dr Shyamaprasad Mookerjee's speech in 1951 and the second a Policy Statement adopted at Vijayawada in 1965 support this stand.

'Our party firmly believes that the future of Bharat lies in the proper appreciation and application of Bhartiya Samskriti

and Maryada.....while we, therefore, aim at establishing a Dharm Rajya, or a rule of law, we only abide by the highest traditions of Bhartiya Samskrit.' (*S.P. Mookerjee, Why Bhartiya, Jana Sangh, op cit*, p 3)

'The objective of Bhartiya Jana Sangh is the rebuilding of Bharat on the basis of Bhartiya Samskriti and Maryada.' (*Principles and Policy*, 1964, a policy statement passed by the Jana Sangh at its Vijayawada session, p 3).

This Bhartiya Samskriti is one and indivisible. All the creeds that form the commonwealth of Bhartiya Rashtra have their share in the stream of Bhartiya culture which has flown down since the Vedic days in unbroken continuity, absorbing and assimilating contributions made by different peoples. Different creeds and cultures, which came in contact with it in the course of history, have become indistinguishable part and parcel of the main current. A talk, therefore, of composite culture is not only illogical but also dangerous for it tends to weaken national unity and encourage fissiparous tendencies. (*Principles and Policy*, *Op Cit* p 18).

Hindu Revivalism

Both the Jana Sangh and the RSS agree that the main problem in India is the conflict of cultures. There is only one culture in India and this is essentially the Hindu culture. If we want national unity, let us have a glimpse into the Bhartiya culture which is the Hindu culture. (*Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, The Conflict of Cultures—Lucknow* p 22). The old talks of Hindu-Muslim unity must be abandoned (*ibid*).

The Jana Sangh leadership fully agrees with the RSS leader when he says that 'the federal structure of the Constitution should be given up and one state, one legislature and one executive be established'.* The spirit of this statement is fully reflected in the following extract taken from the *Principles and Policy*: The present constitution because of its federal structure hampers national integration. The nomenclature adopted was 'Indian

Union' for the country and 'States' for the provinces and the manner in which powers have been distributed gives rise to a feeling of rivalry as between the provinces and the Centre. The Jana Sangh will amend the constitution and declare India a unitary state'.

Longing For Past

The characteristics constitute the main spirit of Hindu revivalism for which both Jana Sangh and the RSS stand :

First of all, there is a romantic longing for the spirit of the past. 'As opposed to the individualistic, critical, rationalistic and materialistic trends, Hindu revivalism stands for a traditional, organic and associative outlook'. It is not opposed to progress but upholds that genuine national progress can be achieved by a greater conformity to religion.

Secondly, the theory of nationalism as propounded by the Hindu revivalists is characterised by a belief that political and economic policy of the nation should be consistent with the philosophy of Hinduism. Thus, 'nationalism is a vehicle for the crystallisation of the cultural ascendancy of Hinduism.' (*Principles and Policy*, *op Cit* p 14).

Thirdly, in the economic field, the implication of this revivalistic nationalism is the assertion of non-interventionism. It is opposed to the economic tenets of socialism.

Lastly, in the field of sociology Hindu revivalism stands for a purified value system based on the Hindu scriptures.

M. S. Golwalkar, Vichar Darshan p 98. This may be compared with Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's observation that the federal structure should be done away with. It is also unsuited to the proper formulation and successful implementation of our planning which necessarily requires a unitary system of government and most of the existing problems are due to the federal structure of the constitution.

Is so Much Violence in Film Necessary?

FREDRIC WERTHAM

THE problem of violence in films is really the problem of violence itself. When we ask ourselves—or rather when we are asked—is film violence necessary, we really have to face the much larger question: Is human violence ever necessary? For art (in our time movies are one of the most important art forms) and life are not completely separate. Whatever we may think of Tolstoy's other theories, his insistence that art and life are inseparable is as valid today as when he wrote it. Most of those who are so defensive and apologetic about film violence are, underneath, complaisant and unconcerned about the actual violent manifestations in our life.

My studies of violence have led me to the conclusion that human violence is not inevitable; that it is not a biological instinct like sex or the desire for food; that it is not ineradicable from human nature nor from society; and that it can be greatly reduced and even eventually abolished. This is not a hope; it is a prognosis. If violence can be conditioned up by propaganda (as we have abundantly learned that it can), it can also be conditioned

down. The very fact that these results are considered so controversial shows how much we have let ourselves be conditioned to accept a social evil as part of our inescapable destiny. An in-born instinct is something positive; human violence is due to negative factors in the personality and in the social medium. Of course the struggle of man against murder will take a very long time. But I believe that if we want to prevent violence we must have this long-range, wider perspective. Fifty years ago traveling to the moon seemed just as impossible as preventing war and violence does now. Yet it is on our current agenda.

Human violence means injuring or killing another human being. Of course symbolic violence and other similar phenomena exist; but they are essentially different. A psychologist writes: vegetables have a life, too, and therefore "even when we eat salad, we kill." That is a good (and not unusual) way to obscure the whole issue. The word *aggression*, so widely used in this connection, is both ambiguous and misleading. It is applied to violence and to something totally different as well, namely to constructive action. The fact that this term is so popular among some behavioural scientists and politicians is revealing.

Violence represented and violence carried out, that is to say violence in fiction and violence in fact, are psychologically and socially not two mutually exclusive opposites. They influence each other in many different ways. One of the most blood-drenched, sadistic novels ever published, *Mafarka*, which ran

into several editions, was written by F. T. Marinetti who later, as a fascist, advocated, practiced and glorified excessive real violences in civil and foreign war.

The profusion of brutality, torture, sadism and every kind of violence in our movies constitutes a very serious social problem. That is part of what Governor Nelson Rockefeller meant when he said in his recent Crime Conference that "there is no greater challenge to our society than the question of the portrayal of violence in the mass media." Off and on I have carried out a content analysis of films. Undoubtedly there is in them a rising curve of violence of every description. In no other human activity does the filmmakers' imagination seem to operate as happily and as resourcefully as in the area of killing. In family dramas or in stories of the prairie, violence abounds—whether it is concerned with in-laws or with outlaws.

Asking people about their reaction turned out to be adding to content analysis a sort of discontent analysis. With regard to violence, moviegoers fall into three categories. First, there are those who told of being genuinely upset: they closed or covered their eyes at certain scenes or walked out of the movies. They made up a considerable percentage. Others were enthralled, fascinated and captivated. The third group had become completely accustomed to it. They were indifferent and felt: this is how it is; you might as well see it. This is in my opinion the most dangerous and socially harmful effect. It would be foolhardy to assume that such

Fredric Wertham, M. D., is probably one of the most highly respected authorities on violence in the world. A psychiatrist of repute, he has written many books on the subject, the latest of which is A Sign for Cain: An Exploration of Human Violence. He has fought for what he believes for almost a half century and has devoted his life to attacking all conditions that beget violence.

an attitude does not spill over into actual life. What it really signifies is a devaluation of human life.

Many excuses are offered to justify proliferation of fictional violence. One is that to depict the most gruesome details is a requirement of realism. I don't think it is. Realism always entails a certain conception of reality. The picture that the violent movies gives us is not truthful, but is distorted. Holding up the mirror to violence does not mean holding up the mirror to life. You can play tricks with reality.

The violent movies do not paint life; they exploit it. As Balzac, himself a great realist, wrote: "It is not enough to observe and to paint, it is necessary to paint and observe with a purpose." Is the purpose of the staggering film violence really to represent life with veracity, or is it not rather to thrill and to shock? Or to attract people, especially young people, with the false idea that ruthlessness is heroic, strong, masculine? Often violence is grossly exaggerated. The director Ello Petri (*The Tenth Victim*) tries to justify this by saying that by sheer exaggeration he hopes to show that sadism and violence are not glamorous. That is not how the audience sees it.

A standard excuse is the claim that showing a lot of violence is a deterrent to violence. War movies are an example. They are promoted under the pretext that they teach us to deplore war, when in reality they make war look adventurous and exciting. They pose as anti-war films but have pro-war tendencies. Sometimes laughter and comedy are introduced into the picture, but I do not think that under any circumstances violent death is something to laugh about. In general, it is a great fallacy to believe that in order to combat violence you have to show it as gorily as possible.

The idea that has done the greatest harm to American audiences, especially to youths, is the notion that film violence provides a safe outlet for hostility and pent-up aggression; that it functions as a safety valve; that

it provides a vicarious satisfaction, thus preventing violent acts; that it has a cathartic effect by relieving tensions that might otherwise explode into real action. It is interesting how many intelligent and educated people have fallen for this belief that the representation of sadistic scenes prevents the execution of sadistic acts. This whole conception is completely unsubstantiated clinically and experimentally. On the contrary, research shows that mass media violence, including movies, acts not as a substitute but as a stimulus.

To use the term *catharsis* as justification for media mayhem is at best a misunderstanding. Neither Aristotle nor Freud nor Frantz Fanon meant it that way. The healthy-outlet theory is harmful to the young consumer, but is convenient and helpful to the adult producer and promoter. Do we give a child an erector set so that he will get rid of his interest in real construction, or a chemistry set so that he gets out of his system his natural bent for science? Recently a State Director of Mental Health advocated that children be permitted to explode their own fireworks because that would release tensions and "produce a cathartic effect." An editorial in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* characterized this as folly. One of the most notorious sex criminals in American history, Albert Fish, who over a period of years killed some fifteen children and violated or mutilated about a hundred others, collected sadistic literature and clippings. That did not help him, as the glib phrase goes, to get rid of his aggression, but gave him further impetus and suggestions.

As for scientific study of the effects of film violence, it is no longer possible to consider movies alone, in isolation. Modern youth is confronted with a broad spectrum of mass media including comic books, television and movies. All have made a fetish of violence. Consequently movies are only one voice in this counterpoint of violence. Even the children who have been pro-

tected (to the extent that is possible) from the influence of any of these categories come into contact with others who have not been so protected. So it is the total influence of mass media violence that has to be assessed.

Careful clinical research on a large variety of children and young people (presented in my book *A Sign For Cain*) has shown me that the saturation of young minds with violent images is detrimental to their development. It is demonstrably a contributing factor to emotional troubles and adjustment difficulties. Two kinds of violence profusely present on the screen are especially noxious. One is sadism. Sadism means getting not only satisfaction but pleasure as well (mostly sexual pleasure) from hurting another person. Display of cruelty, brutality and torture with erotic overtones stimulates sadistic feelings and actually teaches enjoyment of the pain of others. Suggestive sadism on the screen provides not a release in action but a passage to daydreams.

The other infectious kind of violence is the casual taking of life as a logical method of problem-solving. Whatever the problem may be, it will be solved by violence. What do you answer to a young man in jail who asks: "If they don't want us to be violent who do they show it to us all the time?"

The overall cumulative effect of continuous exposure to screen brutality cruelty and homicide is a lowering of the threshold of sensitivity. It doesn't mean that the viewer will go right out and kill or beat up somebody. What is fostered is a tendency to be indifferent to the suffering of others. More and more people are getting accustomed to the use of violence as a legitimate method of behaviour and regard violent death as a natural death. The fact that not everybody is affected does not mean that no one is or that one needs to be definitely predisposed. We are all impressionable and susceptible. Which impressions affect us most depends on many factors in our

previous life and in our environment.

The matter-of-fact way in which violent means are continuously extolled in movies (and of course even more so on TV) is contributing to a current social phenomenon: One part of the population is tending more and more to believe that violence is necessary for any kind of social change. And another part is becoming equally convinced that violence is necessary and justified to prevent any social change.

Some toning down of the violence in films and in the mass media as a whole is at present a social necessity. Violence corrupts. What is needed is not censorship but education and the spreading of interest and understanding. One of the great obstacles is the absence of opposition to the excesses of violence-as-entertainment on the part of those social critics whose business it should be, in the words of Arnold Bennett, to keep an eye on things. That is the other side of violence. There is in fact in this whole field a considerable intellectual confusion: the platinumed platitudes of Marshall McLuhan (the medium as excuse for the absence of a message); the unrepresentative tape-recorded violent lives of Oscar Lewis (insulting to Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and the poor); the fanciful construction of Robert Ardrey (misinterpreting animals as if they were humans and humans as if they were animals). Books like theirs and others similar are mass-produced, mass-promoted and mass-swallowed. They reinforce one another. One brain washes the other. When mothers from all over the country (as I know from my correspondence) ask legitimate questions they are usually given fashionable clichés instead of scientific answers. Violence in fiction and in fact thrives in this atmosphere.

Apparently in the world of today the forces of violence preponderate over those trying to counteract it. Violence, it has been said, is the idiom of our time. It may be argued—in fact it is often argued—that the film should faithfully reflect just that.

That is a profound misunderstanding of art. Films are something more than entertainment or photographic reproduction. We are apt to underestimate the great mass influence of films. According to the *Scientific American*, they are “an art form that has in fifty years changed the thought and habits of large parts of the world.” The moral physiognomy of our society is now characterized by violence. The screen is one of the areas where human progress is either furthered or retarded. Could it

not help us to change our thoughts and habits about violence and aid us in the struggle against violence and hate? As a matter of fact, without that aid the struggle cannot be won.

This article by Dr Fredric Wertham originally appeared in The Journal of the Producers Guild of America, published in Beverly Hill, Calif. It was reprinted in the American quarterly, Dialog (Spring, 1968) from where it is reproduced here.

Consequences

K. C. S.

HAVING achieved our freedom, we have given similar freedom to smugglers, black-market operators and, latterly, to defectors.

Ours is a secular Government; hence missionaries can have no place in our country.

However, we are a highly spiritual people. When people are taught ways of achieving prosperity, as by Father Ferrer, our spiritualism is assailed and shocked by such flagrant materialism.

There is a defect in our Constitution which has led to the infectious outbreak of defections. It guarantees the right to free association. Defections are a form of free enterprise, the slogan of the Swarajya Party, which sees nothing wrong in defections. Defections have been more widespread from the ruling party than elsewhere, and an antidote is now being sought to stop them.

Ours is a socialist country, and therefore our public enterprises are not imbued with the profit motive. They exist to serve the people regardless of profit and loss.

Our religious leaders (like the Buddha) lived as beggars. We are not, therefore, ashamed to beg for food and foreign aid. We know that a beggar has to be a perpetual bankrupt.

South Africa's *apartheid* policy, Australia's and USA's restrictions on immigration, and now UK's immigration policy confirm our wisdom in our social policy regarding *shudras* and

particularly regarding untouchables. To vindicate this policy a playwright has written a play called “Harijans are for burning”.

We venerate cows and therefore want their multiplication as we have multiplied our gods. By accepting their reduced milk yield we demonstrate that we value the spiritual benefit they confer on us rather than their milk.

The recent debate on beef-eating was sacrilegious. Yajnavalkya confessed his partiality towards it, but he was the exception that proves the rule. His *rishi*-hood saved him. Maharshi Mahesh's transcendental wealth is such an exception. Income-tax fools came to collect, but remained to meditate; that is how he was saved.

From the West we have taken democratic government, parliament, law, modes of transport and communication, administrative methods, etc. But we must draw the line somewhere, or we would cease to be Indians. We have drawn the line at the English language.

Politicians deny that power corrupts. Rather, they say, it is corruption that sustains power.

The student unrest is the result of their too prolonged rest enforced by their elders' myths and authority. A student, on being asked why he had broken the plate-glass of a shop, replied, “Because it was there”. Another said that he was a member of Swa-sahayak Mandal (Help Yourself Society).

Czechoslovak Debate

ANALYST

EVENTS in Czechoslovakia have brought out serious differences in the Communist world. While some of Czechoslovakia's immediate neighbours including the Soviet Union, have not concealed their concern at the present turn in the Czech developments, the Communists in a number of countries have differed in their assessment of these developments.

For a proper understanding of this momentous debate, it is necessary to know the points of dispute between the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and those of the Soviet Union and most of the other Communist Parties of Eastern Europe. The official positions of the two sides have been stated in the two important documents recently released: a joint letter addressed by the Communist leaders of five countries—the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Hungary, German Democratic Republic and Poland—at the end of their consultations in Warsaw on July 14-15; and the other is a document entitled "The Standpoint of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia" released from Prague on July 19.

Here below an analysis of the differences has been made taking point-by-point extracts from the two documents. By and large, this covers the salient aspects of this debate which is of far-reaching significance for the world of present-day Communism.

Reactionary Offensive

Five-Party Letter: "The development of events in your country evokes deep anxiety in us. It is our deep conviction that the offensive of the reactionary forces, backed by imperialism, against your Party and the foundations of the social system in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic threatens to push your country off the road of socialism and that consequently it jeopardises the interests of the entire socialist system".

C P of Czechoslovakia: "We agree that it is one of the primary tasks of the party to thwart the aims of right-wing and anti-socialist forces. Our party has worked out its tactical political plan for this matter at the May plenum of the Central Committee and is solving these problems according to it. This plan consists of a system of measures which can be successful only if we have the conditions to gradually implement them in the course of several months."

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Common Cause

Five-Party Letter: "We neither had nor have the intention to interfere in such affairs that are strictly the internal business of your Party and your State, to violate the principles of respect, independence and equality in the relations among the Communist Parties and socialist countries.

"We are not applying to you as representatives of the past who would like to interfere in the correction of mistakes and shortcomings, including the violations of socialist law which had taken place.

We are not interfering in the methods of planning and management of the socialist national economy of Czechoslovakia and in your actions aimed at improving the structure of economy and developing socialist democracy.

"We shall hail the settlement of relations between Czechs and Slovaks on healthy foundations of friendly cooperation within the framework of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

"At the same time, we cannot agree to have hostile forces push your country from the road of socialism and create a threat of severing Czechoslovakia from the socialist community. This is something more than your cause. It is the common cause of all the Communist and Workers' Parties and states united by alliance, cooperation and friendship. This is the common cause of our countries, which have joined in the Warsaw Treaty to ensure the independence, the peace and security in Europe, and to set up an insurmountable barrier for the intrigues of the imperialist forces, aggression and revenge We shall never agree to have imperialism, using ways peaceful and non-peaceful, making a gap from the inside or from the outside in the socialist system and changing in imperialism's favour the correlation of forces in Europe."

C P of Czechoslovakia: "The Letter of the Five-Parties also deals with some internal political problems of ours at present. We accept the assurance that the aim of this interest is not to interfere with the 'methods of planning and management of socialist national economy in Czechoslovakia' and with our 'measures aimed at perfecting the structure of the economy, at developing socialist democracy' and that the 'settlement of relations between Czechs and Slovaks on the sound bases of fraternal cooperation within the framework of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic' are welcomed."

"Like the authors of the Letter we shall never agree to the historic achievements of socialism and the security of the nations of our country being threatened and imperialism, by peaceful or forcible means, to break through the socialist system and to change the balance of forces in Europe to its advantage. The main content of our development after January is the actual effort to increase our internal strength and the stability of the socialist system and thus also our bonds of alliance."

* *

Role of Party

Five-Party Letter: "Hamstringing of the leading role of the Communist Party leads to liquidation of socialist democracy and the socialist system. There are thus imperilled the foundations of our alliance and the safety of the comity of our countries....."

"Capitalising on the weakening of Party leadership of the country and demagogically abusing the slogan of democratisation, the forces of reaction triggered off a campaign against the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and its honest and devoted cadres, clearly seeking to abolish the Party's leading role, subvert the socialist system, and place Czechoslovakia in opposition to the other socialist countries."

"The political organisations and clubs that have emerged of late outside the framework of the National Front have become, in effect, headquarters of the forces of reaction. The Social Democrats are doggedly striving to establish their own party, are organising underground committees, and are seeking to cleave the working class movement in Czechoslovakia and to take over the leadership of the country in order to effect a bourgeois restoration. Anti-socialist and revisionist forces have laid hand on the press, radio and television, making of them a rostrum for attacking the Communist Party, disorienting the working class and all working folk, spewing forth uncurbed anti-socialist demagogy and undermining the friendly relations between the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the other socialist countries. Some mass communication media are carrying on a systematic campaign of real moral terror against people opposing the forces of reaction or voicing anxiety over the trend of developments."

"Despite the decisions of the May plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, which indicated the threat emanating from right-wing and anti-communist forces as the main danger, the increasing attacks that reaction has mounted have not met with any rebuff. This is precisely why reaction has been able to publicly address the entire country and to print its political platform under the title of "The 2,000 Words" which contain an outright call for struggle against the Communist Party and constitutional authority, for strikes and disorders. This call represents a serious danger to the Party, the National Front and the socialist state and is an attempt to introduce anarchy. In essence this statement is the organisational and political platform of counter-revolution. . . . Far from being repudiated, this platform, being so extensively circulated at a serious

moment on the eve of the extraordinary congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, has, on the contrary, found obvious advocates in the Party rank-and-file and leadership, who second the anti-socialist calls. . . . A situation has thus arisen which is absolutely unacceptable for a socialist country".

CP of Czechoslovakia: "A number of fears explained in the letter were expressed by ourselves in the resolution of the May plenary session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. However, we see the causes of the political situation, which is full of contradictions mainly in the accumulation of these contradictions over the years preceding the January plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. These contradictions cannot be satisfactorily solved at once in a short time. In the process of the realization of the political line of the Action Programme of our Party it therefore necessarily happens that the wide stream of healthy socialist activity is accompanied by extreme tendencies, that the remnants of anti-socialist forces in our society are also trying to tag along and that at the same time activity is being also developed by the dogmatic-sectarian forces connected with the faulty policy of the time before the January plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Not even the Party itself can in this complex situation remain untouched by internal contradictions accompanying the process of unification along the line of the Action Programme. The negative phenomena of this process also include violation of the principles of democratic centralism in the dealings of some Communists which is mainly the consequences of the fact that, for many long years, the old party leadership applied bureaucratic centralism and suppressed internal party democracy. All this prevents us from always achieving in political work only those results we ourselves would wish."

"We do not wish to hide these facts and we do not hide them from our own party and people either... We do not, however, see any realistic reasons which would justify assertions calling our present situation counter-revolutionary, assertions of an immediate endangering of the basis of the socialist system, or assertions that a change is being prepared in Czechoslovakia in the orientation of our socialist foreign policy and that there is a concrete threat of a separation of our country from the socialist community."

"Our alliance and friendship with the USSR and other socialist countries is deeply rooted in the social system, in the historical traditions and experience of our nations, in their interests, their thoughts and feelings. The liberation from Nazi occupation and the entry into the path of a new life is for ever connected in the consciousness of our people with the historical victory of the USSR in the Second World War, with respect for the heroes who laid down their lives in this fight."

"We agree with the opinion that the strength and the firmness of our ties—which are undoubtedly the common vital interest of us all—depend on the inner strength of the socialist system of each of our fraternal countries. We do not doubt that the

undermining of the leading role of the Communist Party would carry a threat of the liquidation of socialist society. However, just for this reason, it is essential that we should understand each other correctly on the question on which the strength of the socialist system and the strengthening of the leading role of the Communist Party depends today....." We do not hide the fact—and we stated this plainly at the May plenum of the Central Committee—that in this country there exist today also tendencies to discredit the party, to deny it the moral and political right to lead the society. However, if we put ourselves the question whether it is correct to judge similar phenomena as a threat to the socialist system, as a decline of the leading role of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia under the pressure of reactionary, counter-revolutionary forces—we come to the conclusion that this is not the case....

.....The Presidium of the Central Communist Party of Czechoslovakia; the Government and the National Front unequivocally rejected the appeals of the statement of 'The Two Thousand Words', which encourages anarchist acts, to violating the constitutional character of our political reform. It must be noted that, following these negative standpoints, similar acts did not in fact occur in practice anywhere in our country and that the consequences of the appeal 'The Two Thousand Words' did not threaten the party, the National Front or the socialist state. A negative feature of our actual conditions are still the campaigns and unjustified slanders directed against various functionaries and public officials—including members of the new leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia—which are conducted from extreme positions both Right and Left. The secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and leading comrades have in concrete cases come out unequivocally also against these methods.

"We know that this situation is made possible by the fact that we have abolished censorship in our country and enacted freedom of expression and the press. What in the past was spread only in the form of 'whispered propaganda' etc. can now be expressed in public.

"However, if we put ourselves the question whether it is correct to evaluate such phenomena as forfeiture of the leading political role of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia under the onslaught of reactionary, counter-revolutionary forces—we reach the conclusion that this is not the case. For all this is only part of our present political situation. There is also another, and in our opinion the decisive part of this situation. The growth of the authority of the new, democratic policy of the Party in the eyes of the broadest masses of the working people, the growth of the activity of the absolute majority of the population. The abolition of censorship, freedom of expression are supported by the absolute majority of the people of all classes and strata of our society. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia is trying to prove that it is capable of a different political leadership and management than by means of the condemned bureaucratic-police methods,

mainly by the strength of its Marxist-Leninist ideas, of its program, its correct policy supported by all the people."

Foreign Policy

Five-Party Letter : It is in this atmosphere that attacks are also being made on the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic's socialist foreign policy, on the alliance and friendship with socialist countries. Voices are heard demanding a revision of our common coordinated policy as regards the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), despite the fact that the best German government invariably pursues a policy hostile to the interests of the security of our countries. The flirtation of the FRG authorities and revenge-seekers meets with response among leading quarters of your country.

"The entire course of events in your country in recent months shows that the forces of counter-revolution, supported by imperialist centres, have developed a broad offensive on the socialist system without meeting due resistance on the part of the Party and the people's power. There is no doubt that the centres of international imperialist reaction are also involved in these events in Czechoslovakia, and are doing everything to inflame and aggravate the situation, inspiring anti-socialist forces to act in this direction. The bourgeois press under the pretext of praising 'democratisation' and 'liberalisation' in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is waging an instigating campaign against the fraternal socialist countries. FRG ruling quarters are especially active, attempting to use the events in Czechoslovakia to sow discord between the socialist countries, isolate the GDR and carry out their revenge-seeking designs."

C P of Czechoslovakia: "The letter mentions attacks against the socialist foreign policy, assaults against the alliance and friendship with socialist countries, voices calling for a revision of our common and coordinated policy in relation to the GFR and it is even asserted that attempts at making advances on the part of the authorities of the GFR and revanchists are finding response in the leading circles of our country. We are surprised at such assertions because it is well known that the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is implementing a consistent socialist foreign policy, whose principles are formulated in the Action Programme of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the Programme Statement of the Government. These documents, statements made by leading Czechoslovak representatives and also our further actions consistently proceed from the principles of socialist internationalism, alliance and the development of friendly relations with the Soviet Union and the other socialist states....

"In view of the bitter historical experiences of our nations with German imperialism and militarism it is inconceivable that any Czechoslovak Government could ignore these experiences and light-mindedly hazard with the fate of our country. This can be done even less by a socialist government and we must reject any suspicion in this direction.

"As regards our relations with the GFR, it is

universally known that the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, although it is an immediate neighbour of the GFR, was the last to take certain steps towards a partial regulation of mutual relations, particularly in the economic field, whereas other socialist countries adapted their relations with the GFR to this or that extent much earlier without this having caused any fears.

"We at the same time consistently respect and defend the interests of the GDR, our socialist ally, and do everything in our power to strengthen its international position and authority. This is also explicitly proved by all the speeches of leading representatives of our party and the State in the entire period after January 1968."

Warsaw Treaty Exercises

Five-Party Letter: "Is it not for the purpose of sowing distrust and enmity towards the Soviet Union and other socialist countries that the press, radio and television of your country unleashed a campaign in connection with the staff exercises of the armed forces of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation? Matters have gone so far that the joint staff exercises of our troops with the participation of several units of the Soviet Army, customary for military cooperation, are being used for groundless accusations of violating the sovereignty of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. And this is taking place in Czechoslovakia, the people of which sacredly honour the memory of Soviet servicemen who gave their lives for the freedom and sovereignty of that country. At the same time near the Western border of your country, exercises of military forces of the NATO aggressive bloc are being conducted with the participation of the army of revenge-seeking Western Germany. But not a single word is mentioned about this."

C P of Czechoslovakia: "The staff exercise of the allied forces of the Warsaw Treaty on the territory of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is concrete proof of our faithful fulfilment of our alliance commitments. In order to ensure its successful course we took the necessary measures on our side. Our people as well as members of the Army welcomed the Soviet and other allied troops on the territory of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. The highest representatives of the Party and the Government demonstrated by their participation, what importance we attach to it and the interest we have in it. Obscurities and some doubts in the minds of our public occurred only after repeated changes of the time of departure of the allied troops from the territory of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic after the conclusion of the exercise."

Treaty Rights

Five-Party Letter: "Our countries are linked with one another by treaties and agreements. These important mutual obligations of states and peoples are based on the general aspiration to defend socialism and ensure collective security of the socialist countries. Historic responsibility rests on our Parties and peoples for the revolutionary gains not to be lost."

C P of Czechoslovakia: "The agreements and

treaties linking the socialist countries are an important factor of mutual cooperation, peace and collective security. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic fully respects its contractual commitments and further develops the system of treaties with socialist countries which is proved by the new treaties of alliance we have recently concluded with the Bulgarian People's Republic, as well as by the prepared treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Rumanian Socialist Republic."

Tasks

Five-Party Letter: "The cause of defending the power of the working class and all working people, of the socialist gains in Czechoslovakia demands—

—a decisive and bold offensive against the right-wing and anti-socialist forces, mobilisation of all means of defence created by the socialist state;

—the stopping of the activity of all political organisations coming out against socialism;

—the mastery by the party of the means of mass information—press, radio, television—and the use of them in the interests of the working class, all working people and socialism;

—the closing of the ranks of the Party itself on the principled basis on Marxism-Leninism, undeviating observation of the principle of democratic centralism, the struggle against those who help the inimical forces by their activity.

"We are aware that forces exist in Czechoslovakia which are capable of defending the socialist system and inflicting defeat on the anti-socialist elements. The working class, the toiling peasantry, the front-rank intelligentsia—the overwhelming majority of the working people of the Republic are ready to do everything necessary for the sake of the further development of the socialist society. The task today is to provide these healthy forces with a clear-cut perspective, to stir them to action, to mobilise their energy for the struggle against the forces of counter-revolution in order to safeguard and consolidate socialism in Czechoslovakia.

"In the face of danger of counter-revolution and in response to the appeal of the Communist Party, the voice of the working class should ring out in full might. The working class, together with the toiling peasantry, exerted the greatest effort for the sake of the triumph of the socialist revolution. They precisely cherish most of all the safeguarding of the gains of socialism."

C P of Czechoslovakia: "Our Party has laid down the following main aims and stages of political work:

(1) To consistently dissociate the Party as a whole from the deformations of the past for which specific persons of the old party leadership are responsible: these specific persons are being justly called to task.

(2) To prepare for the 14th extraordinary Party Congress, which will evaluate the development and the political situation after the January plenum and will in accordance with the principles of democratic centralism in the Party lay down the binding line for the entire party, adopt political standpoint on the federative set-up of the Czechoslovak

Socialist Republic, approve the new state and elect a new Central Committee so that it has the full authority and confidence of the party and the entire society.

(3) After the 14th Congress to launch an offensive for solving all the fundamental internal political questions: for the construction of a political system based on the socialist platform of the federative constitutional set-up, for the elections to the representative bodies of the State (federal, national and local) and for preparing the new constitution.

"At present we are at the stage of the political fight for the implementation of the line of the May plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. It is a real fight and we therefore are scoring not only victories but we have also setbacks: however, it is never possible to judge the result of the entire fight according to the results of individual battles. Despite this we nevertheless believe that since the May plenum the political situation is being successfully consolidated.....

"A certain stabilization is thus going on in the party and the basic steps for preparing the Congress proceed successfully.

"In conformity with the resolution of the plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia a politically binding socialist platform of the National Front is being created on the initiative of Communists. On June 15, 1968, all the political components of the National Front adopted a programme statement which clearly accepts the historically won leading position of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and which expresses the principles of a socialist system, of an internal and foreign socialist policy. The National Front has during these very days been discussing the proposal for its statute, which is binding organisation norm ensuring the socialist political orientation of all parties and organisations.

"By the law on judicial rehabilitations we are basically solving the painful problem of the illegal repressive measures against innocent people which took place in the past years. This step has clearly helped that the attention of the wide public and also of the media of information no longer concentrates on these questions.

"In September, immediately after the party congress, certain new important laws will be discussed: the constitutional law on the National Front which is to confirm the permanent existence of the system of political parties on the forum of the National Front and further the law on the right of assembly and association which will determine legal regulations for the creation and the activities of various voluntary organisations, associations, clubs, etc. This will make it possible to effectively counter attempts of anti-Communist forces to gain an organizational basis for public activities.

"Communists are also in accordance with the resolution of the May plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia solving with initiative important questions of the work of the trade unions and enterprise workers' councils. On the whole, the party managed in

connection with these questions to counter political demagoguery, which attempted to take advantage of legitimate demands of the workers in order to disorganize our system and to fan an uncontrolled movement in the name of 'workers demands' so as to make the economic and political situation in the country more difficult. At the same time, however, we are solving, according to the means at our disposal, some burning social political problems such as the raising of low pensions and urgent adjustments of wages. The Government is gradually dealing with the fundamental economic problems of the country in order to provide a new impulse for the development of production and so as to make it possible to move over to further improving the living standard of the people.

"We have taken the necessary measures to safeguard the security of our state borders: the Party fully supports the consolidation of the Army, the security body, prosecutors and the judiciary. The Party has also taken a clear stand on the question of the People's Militia whose statewide meeting has given full support to the new leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the Action Programme. The importance of this step was, as is known, directly welcomed by the working people not only in this country, but also in the USSR.

"We consider all these steps to be important result in the implementation of the line adopted at the May plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, important features of the consolidation of political conditions and of the strengthening of not only the declared but the really leading influence of the party in our country."

"In spite of this we see and do not want to conceal that we are not fulfilling all conclusions drawn at the May plenary session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia satisfactorily. It happens also at present that now and then there appear at public meetings and in media of information voices and tendencies which bypass the positive endeavours of the party, the state bodies and the National Front.

"We consider the solution of this question to be a more long-term task and are guided by the resolution of the May plenary session of the Central Committee according to which 'political management cannot be applied by the old, administrative power structures'."

Grip Over Situation

Five-Party Letter: "Don't you see that counter-revolution is wresting from you one position after another, that the Party is losing control over the course of events and is further retreating under the pressure of anti-communist forces ?.....

It is our conviction that a situation has arisen, in which the threat to the foundations of socialism in Czechoslovakia jeopardises the common vital interests of other socialist countries. The peoples of our states would never forgive us for being indifferent and light-hearted in the face of such a danger."

C P of Czechoslovakia: "The evaluation of the

situation as contained in the letter of the five parties as well as the undoubtedly sincerely meant advice for our further course do not take into account the entire intricacy of the dynamic social movement as it was analyzed by the May plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the complexity of the conclusions adopted by this plenum. Our policy, if it wants to remain a Marxist-Leninist policy, cannot be based exclusively on superficial phenomena which do not always accurately reflect the profound causes of social development but must understand the substance of the development and be guided by it.

"The fraternal parties can at present serve the interests of socialism in our country primarily by expressing confidence in the leadership of the CP of Czechoslovakia and full support of its policy."

1956 Vogue

Five-Party Letter: "Each of our Parties is responsible not only to its working class and its people, but also to the international working class, the world communist movement and cannot evade the obligations following from this. Therefore, we must be solidary and united in defending the gains of socialism, our security and the in international positions of the entire socialist camp."

C P of Czechoslovakia: "We consider as permanently valid the principle expressed in the declaration of the Government of the USSR of October 30, 1956, which says: 'The countries of the great community of socialist nations, united by the common ideals of the construction of a socialist society and the principles of proletarian internationalism, can build their mutual relations exclusively on the basis of complete equality, respect of territorial integrity, national independence and sovereignty and mutual non-interference in internal affairs'. This principle, as is well known, was confirmed by the Conference of representatives of Communist Parties in Moscow in November of 1957 and was generally accepted. In all our activities we want to further strengthen and develop the deep internationalist traditions which, in our view, must include both understanding of the common interests and goals of the progressive forces of the world as well as understanding of specific national needs."

"We do not want our relationships to further deteriorate and are willing to contribute on our part towards calming down the situation; in the interest of socialism and the unity of the socialist countries on our part we shall do nothing that would be at variance with this aim. We expect, however, that the other parties will help these efforts of ours and will show understanding for our situation."

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On July 22, Soviet Communist Party organ, Pravda, editorially criticised the "Point of view of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak CP" in course of which it said:

"The document contains admissions of the fact that not all the conclusions of the May Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia are fulfilled adequately-

ly, that at public meetings and in mass communication media there occur, from time to time, voices and tendencies opposing the positive efforts of the Party, the state organs and the National Front. The document admits that the calls contained in the appeal 'The Two Thousand Words' incite anarchistic actions, to the violation of the constitutional character of our political reform. And finally, the document admits that there are now in progress in Czechoslovakia campaigns and underground instigations against individual executives and public figures, the members of the new leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia included."

"But what conclusions are drawn from all these admissions in the document?"

"Shunning an all-round political analysis of the real situation in the country, the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia made a step backwards from the decisions of the May Plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia at which it was said outright that the anti-socialist forces now at work in Czechoslovakia are the chief danger in the present stage. An obvious change of political attitudes is evidenced by the following assertion of the document of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia:

"We see no real reasons for stating that the current situation is counter-revolutionary, that there is a direct threat to the foundations of the socialist system, that in Czechoslovakia a change in the orientation of our socialist foreign policy is being prepared and that there exists a concrete danger of our country being torn away from the socialist camp."

"The document of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia passed over in silence the problems of principle raised in the letter of the fraternal parties to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and, at the same time, expresses a disagreement with the assessment of the scope of the threat to the socialist system in Czechoslovakia."

"Meanwhile, the situation in Czechoslovakia today is such that the hostile forces are pushing the country off the road of socialism and create a danger of Czechoslovakia being torn away from the socialist camp."

"The Right and anti-socialist forces in Czechoslovakia, encouraged and supported by imperialist reaction, are working for the liquidation of the leading role of the Communist Party in society, undermining the socialist state and the social system, for the restoration of the capitalist order. They have laid hands on the media of mass information—the press, radio and television—and are using them for anti-socialist propaganda, attempting to incite enmity towards the Soviet Union and other socialist countries....."

"Thus a lack of understanding or an undesire to understand the entire depth of the danger brought about by the offensive of the Right and anti-socialist forces against the revolutionary gains of
(Continued on Page 37)

Can a Country have More Than One Communist Party ?—VI

S. A. DANGE

XVI

74 It is the peculiar misfortune of our Party that at every serious turn in the history of our country, we get drowned in serious differences, from which we are rescued by the loyalty of the working masses to the ideas of class-struggle and their repeatedly teaching us to return to the reality of the earth. The moment our feet touch the earth our strength and sense are restored like that of the giant in Greek mythology.

Our disastrous line of refusing to defend the interests of the people in the name of defending their international interests had isolated the Party from 1942 onwards. Not that the observance of the international tasks was wrong. What was wrong was the Right opportunist and sectarian interpretation of these tasks. Thousands of rank and file members felt that way and they were right.

When the war ended the Party took some time to realise the new complexities of the situation. The victories of the Red Army, the defeat of the imperialists the rise of new socialist states, and the weakening of the imperialist system sent a wave of mass upsurge and revolutionary upheavals throughout the colonial world.

The revolt in India gathered momentum through the INA trials, the strikes of communication workers, the naval mutiny and the discontent in the army.

It is to the credit of the Party that after an initial pause to consider what was happening, it put itself on the side of the fighting masses wherever we had preserved our roots.

The British ruling circles first tried to hit back but failed. Then they handed over power to the leadership of the Congress and the last of the Viceroy's left the Indian shores.

But when the imperialists handed over power, they had sown seeds of disunity and disruption by partitioning the country. Vast migration of population, Hindu Muslim massacres, invasion of Kashmir, the revolt of the Princes, the loot of the people by the millionaires and war profiteers and a hundred and one problems threatened to overwhelm the newly-won freedom of the country.

The previous instalments of this thesis appeared serially in Mainstream (June 1, July 6, 13, 20, and 27, 1968),

75. And controversies overwhelmed the leadership of the Party.

Was the country really free? Is the transfer of power real or sham? Is it independence? If it is real, then we must try to strengthen it, defend it and help the new Government of free India to overcome the new threats to the country's future.

But, if independence is sham, then it means the national bourgeoisie and the leadership have gone over to imperialism. Then we must overthrow it, carry the revolution forward. We must now combine two revolutions in one - the anti-imperialist democratic, which is left incomplete by the national betrayers and the socialist which is now on the world agenda.

The General Secretary of the Party, P. C. Joshi, held the view that the transfer of power and independence was not a sham. It was a victory of the people. The two other members of the Polit Bureau, B. T. Ranadive and Dr Adhikari held that independence was a sham and a manoeuvre. P. C. Joshi was put in a quarantine and Ranadive became the virtual General Secretary.

76. As I was going to Europe, it was suggested to me that I could consult with comrades on the new perspectives. The Second Congress of the Party was due to be held in February 1948 in Calcutta.

Whom to consult and on what organisational basis? There was no more the Comintern to refer to by right!

77. The situation in Europe itself was extremely complicated. The American imperialists who had gathered great strength and had the atom bomb were toying with the idea of attacking the Soviet Union with the Bomb. They were planning a counter-revolutionary coup in Czechoslovakia and had smuggled arms in food trains. They and the British were creating tension on Trieste to find excuses to attack Yugoslavia. The post-war democratic coalition in France was forced to expel the Communists from the Government. Democracy and freedom which were being so much talked about in the Atlantic Charter and the UNO were being suppressed by murder and assassination, the two big weapons which have been used by the bourgeoisie in furtherance of its aims, many a time. Had they not tried to kill Lenin to overthrow the Bolshevik power? They had killed Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg to defeat the German Revolution. They now tried to kill

Thorez, leader of the French Party and Togliatti of the Italian Party.

And right in our home in India, when some norms of democracy and democratic secular values were being introduced and the age-old social divisions of communalism and casteism were being sought to be overcome, they killed Mahatma Gandhi for daring to prevent a communal reactionary civil war inspired by the conspiracies of the British.

78. Keeping all this before my mind, I was not surprised, when the Czechs told me that the workers of Prague were going to defend socialism with arms in hand and not by conferring "democratic liberties" on the counter-revolution. The assassins of socialism would be firmly put down. The posh hotels of Prague, Bucharest, Budapest or Belgrade seething with American conspirators, were well covered by socialist vigilance and socialist guns. And I had occasion to see how!

79. I had the benefit of discussing things with Tito and Kardeli in Belgrade. I talked to Zapotovski in Czechoslovakia. I met Dimitrov in Sofia and then finally the comrades in Moscow.

I was diffident when speaking to Comrade Zhdanov. "I want to discuss a few things about India. But there is no Comintern now"—I said.

"There is no Comintern but international brotherhood remains. So let us talk," he said. Then I learnt that he had just returned from the meeting of the European Communist Parties, where the Cominform had been formed.

80. The foundation of the Cominform was denounced by the imperialists as "resurrection of the Communist International". So Pravda wrote on October 10, 1947:

"The establishment of the Information Bureau by no means signifies the restoration of a global Communist organisation with a centralised leadership, such as the Communist International represented at the time.....

"The Communist International which played a positive role in the cause of educating the leaders of the working class, has long become a past stage in the history of the development of the International working-class movement. To return to the Communist International would now mean to go back, not forward."

True. The new organisation was not global, not all the Parties of the world were in it, nor had they a Congress of delegates and an elected leadership functioning on the basis of democratic centralism as the Comintern had.

But the organisation was global in its effect, in its ideological and political influence and it had its own leadership and discipline. It contained all the parties of the socialist camp and the parties of the two most organised sections of the working class of Europe—namely of France and Italy. The very first statement of the Cominform formulated the fundamental political task for the world's Communist Parties and very soon its organ, *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy* (LPPD)—a clumsy name for a journal though it had—acquired the status of the central organ of the world Communist movement.

81. The formulation of the perspectives and tasks in the Cominform Manifesto were quite different from the style and tone of the Comintern. It had very much in mind not only the socialist revolutions in Europe, but also the newly emerging freedom of the colonial world. National independence, democracy and peace were the watchwords of the manifesto. Parts of it read as follows:

"There is a great task awaiting the Communist Parties, that of preserving freedom and peace.... *They must grasp in their hands* the banner of national independence and sovereignty in their own countries. If the Communist parties stand fast at their posts, if they refuse to be intimidated and blackmailed, if they courageously guard the democracy, national sovereignty, independence and self-determination of their countries, if they know how to fight against attempts at the economic and political subjugation of their countries and place themselves at the head of all the forces ready to defend the cause of national honour and independence, then and then only no plans to subjugate the countries of Europe and Asia can succeed."

If you read the thing carefully, here was an answer to my queries, and to the questions raised in the Indian situation.

82. Though due to post-war difficulties, the services of an English interpreter were not available on the spot and hence our talk suffered from a great handicap yet things had become clear enough. I put down a few of my thoughts in an article in the *New Times*. But by the time I returned, the Politbureau of our Party had already made up its mind and its line for the Party Congress.

XVII

83 The Party Congress decided to call the country's independence a sham. It nailed down the new Government of Nehru as a virtual agent of imperialism and a betrayer and called for struggle to overthrow it.

The outgoing General Secretary accepted his mistakes of outright reformism. *There was no self-criticism from the other Politbureau members, who were more than full partners in his reformism.* A new Central Committee, Polit Bureau and General Secretary were elected. *The mood of the Congress was to the Left, specially due to the unheard of loot that the war-profiteers had amassed and the attacks they were launching on the masses by using the new state power they had acquired. A sober class analysis of the new phenomenon of a colonial country acquiring independence was not done. At the Congress, the slogans and approach that were embodied in the Cominform statement were ignored. The oppositional role of the national bourgeoisie was under-rated or almost ruled out.* Even the short message of greetings from the CPSU which spoke of strengthening the "independence and sovereignty" of India was virtually suppressed though formally read. Those who raised it in the Central Committee were brushed aside as reading too much meaning in a "formal message."

84. All that could be tolerated and when proved wrong could have been corrected, had proper

organisational methods been followed in the Party. But they were not. *Democratic centralism*, which had some place, though formal in the previous phase, completely vanished under the plea of underground conditions. The Central Committee never met. The Politbureau rarely. The General Secretary arrogated all the powers of the Congress, the Central Committee and the Politbureau to himself.

85. More astounding than this was that under the plea of reintroducing correct Marxism not only in our Party but in the whole world movement, many of the leaders of the world parties, including Mao Tse-Tung were criticised as "revisionist and reformist". *Adventurist calls for action in India were given*. Strikes were called without caring to know what the workers and the trade union had to say. Almost all the non-party trade unionists, including N. M. Joshi were "expelled". The "Trade Union Record" became an organ of Party slogans. The AITUC was disabled and split. All the lessons of the 1929 sectarianism were forgotten. After twenty years again, we were at the same place.

And when the masses refused to respond, those who were in prison were asked to make the prisons the starting point of "revolutionary uprisings," which was a clear indication of the total bankruptcy on the mass front outside. Those who argued against the line were dubbed as 'cowards'. Party Committees were summarily dissolved and raw men obedient to the personal will of the General Secretary were installed in authority. Party leaders, Central Committee members were censured and suspended or terrorised into silence.

The Party came to the verge of a new split.

86. And I cannot help naming once again the author of this disruption and splittism in the name of revolution. Once again it was the same Comrade B. T. Ranadive, who this time had managed to become the General Secretary. His rudeness and arrogance accompanied by a veneer of "theoretical thinking" and total failure to organise anything on the mass front went to its extreme. One almost had an example of "personality cult and personal power" without State power in a Party of a vast country like ours.

And the solution to this was rendered difficult because the repression let loose by the Government against the Party and the masses covered up the mistakes and gave an alibi to adventurism.

What "sins", we Communists in India had committed to meet such a fate? It is a real tragedy of talents. And its last act is not yet over.

87. Then the Andhra Party raised the issue of Path of the Indian Revolution, still from the point of view of Left orientation: whether the Indian revolution would be along the "Chinese Path", that is the peasant guerrilla war, or the "Russian Path" that is the proletarian uprising and capture of power. Though the poser was wrong, still it raised a useful discussion. But nothing came of it. The Andhra Party decided to ignore the Politbureau which by now had been reduced to the lone General Secretary with a few den-retinue who could do nothing.

XVIII

88 *At this juncture, the situation drew the attention of the Cominform comrades and also others.* Those of us who were in jail and those outside tried to build up some channel to have the situation discussed. A member of the Chinese Central Committee visited India and tried to see me but was refused permission by the Government. But things had moved.

The journal LPPD came out with an article, in January 1950, criticising the line of the Party. Its wrong class-approach and evaluation of class-alliances were politely indicated. The Party's isolation and Left sectarianism were not openly referred to but it was plain enough for all to see.

With that article the storm burst. Party members and particularly the Andhra comrades leading the heroic Telangana movement took steps to change the leadership. But the line of Left sectarianism did not undergo any change. As I put it in those days, it had migrated from the city to the countryside. It was time to re-evaluate the whole of the national situation. But who was to do it? Where was the authority or the forum of consultation before whom questions, which we could not resolve, could be placed? There was no Communist International. The Cominform had a limited range and so it could not be the forum.

Once again controversies broke out. Those of us who disagreed with the new Politbureau and the Andhra line wrote out a document called the document of the Three Ps, that is Ajoy Ghosh, S. V. Ghate and myself.

XIX

89 The new Central Committee with Comrade Rajeswar Rao as General Secretary, asked the Central Committee of the CPSU for a consultation on the Indian problems. The Comintern was gone. The Cominform too was on the way out. But international brotherhood remained. The Indian delegation consisted of Comrade Rajeswar Rao, Basavapunniah, Ajoy Ghosh and myself.

90. The Commission of the Central Committee of the CPSU was led by Comrade Stalin and included Comrades Suslov, Molotov and Malenkov.

It is not possible at present to bring to record all the discussions we had. After the discussions, we ourselves drafted a Programme of the Party. The draft was made by our Commission. With a few changes, it was put before a special Party Conference which met in Calcutta in 1951.

91. This story is now drawing to its close, because that was the *last* intervention we sought for clarifying the Indian situation, the Indian problem and the way Marxism-Leninism should try to understand it.

There are two reasons why I call it last. One is that the 1950 discussions put us completely on the path of *self-reliance*, on the path of doing our own thinking for ourselves first, without renouncing the test of proletarian internationalism. And in this, Com. Stalin made a great contribution.

92. The first thing they said was that they did not want "to interfere" in our affairs. But when they found that things were taking a dangerous turn and they were asked to express their opinion, the LPPD article was written.

It was wrong to argue whether the Indian revolution would follow the Russian Path or the Chinese Path. It would be neither. It would be an Indian Path, following from our own history and class formations, our own revolutionary experience and capacity to lead. Such a country like India could not fit into a dogmatic ready-made formula, whether Russian or Chinese. To do that itself is a denial of Marxism-Leninism.

For example, there was the single outstanding fact that the Indian working class was far bigger in size and in experience than the Chinese had. We have a problem of linguistic nationalities and social divisions as no other country had. And so on. Our Path will be our path while adhering to the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism.

India had attained independence, though the Government was under the influence of the British.

But we were wrong in thinking that Nehru was a puppet of the imperialists like Chiang Kai Shek though he carried on a spurious play in between. The revolution was not round the corner. We must work firmly for the worker-peasant alliance. And so on.

With one clear stroke we were taken away from rigid moorings of Paths and Formulas. Not that all that was said in the meeting or in the Programme we drafted was unchangeable. But a new turn had really come in.

93. The second reason why I call it last was that soon after, the criticisms of the "Personality Cult" brought about a great psychological change in all the Parties of the world. Marxism-Leninism became a real philosophy and guide to action based on historical experience and objective facts and not a dictat of any one person's Thoughts 'or Sayings.

These two things put the Indian Party on a new and true historical road of the Indian Revolution. The question then is that if new differences arise, do the obligations of proletarian internationalism play any role in resolving them? And should they? If they do, what is the form?

That is the final question with which this story began and would end.

94. Our Party undertook the task of reorganising itself on the basis of our own experience and understanding and drawing the membership into the process of thinking on the basis of democratic centralism. The old dogmatists, both of the Right and Left variety, harassed the new development. When the Chinese schism arose and India and our Party were directly attacked by the misguided Chinese chauvinists, our Party stood the test. We relied on our own understanding of the situation, of the principles of proletarian internationalism and our duty towards it as well as our duty to our working-class and the Indian revolution.

In fact, our Party should be proud to see that what we told the international communist movement about the true meaning of the Chinese developments

and deviations has been proved true in all its aspects, philosophical and political.

95. The remnants of the past, however, persisted and once again succeeded in splitting our Party. It is a strange irony that whereas formerly internationalism helped to settle our differences and unite our Party, this time the split was sought to be sanctified in the name of internationalism.

XX

96 What is the way out?

The way out is not to accept that Marxism-Leninism in India will be understood and led in three different ways by three or more "Communist Parties." In fact Marxism-Leninism itself is being challenged by some, who while fighting and giving their lines for the world revolution want to deny some of its basic truths.

The world revolution and the path to socialism is now inundated with a variety of Thoughts and Lines. There are Thoughts of Mao Tse-Tung, of Fidel Castro, of Che Guevarra, of Debray, of Marcuse, of the student Bendit and the writers of Prague and Paris. For some the working-class does not exist or is too corrupted to be called the leader of the revolution. For some the revolution only travels by the East Wind or the guerrilla peasant of the countryside. For some there is no need for any ideology but the sound of a gun-barrel. For some, the revolution must provide for such a "pure democracy" that the working-class should allow its enemy, the bourgeoisie, to overthrow its state power and even restore capitalism.

In such a welter, we in India have been thrown off our balance too by splits and more splits among the splitters themselves.

97. It is, therefore, time that all those forces, which believe in Marxism-Leninism once again sit together in a World Conference, as they did in 1960, deliberate together and unite in common action, to be followed by common united organisation.

In order to do this, it is not necessary for the Communist Party of India to surrender its right and status of being the only Communist Party of the country, whatever the names others may take.

A country cannot have more than one Communist Party. And a Communist Party cannot allow the working-class and the forces of the revolution to be confused by saying that there can be many Communist Parties in a country.

98. But the question may be asked that if we do not do so, how will the others even agree to start a dialogue for unity? There can be a solution for this question.

Did not all the different lines of thought sit in the 1960 World Conference to argue out their differences and unite? Why not now?

But in those days there were no open splits. Now there is a split party in almost every country. Will you agree to sit with the splitters in a joint conference? We can on one condition—all those, who

(Continued on Page 37)

Vietnam : Power Equations

C. N. CHITTA RANJAN

Vietnam Triangle— by Donald S. Zagoria :
Pegasus, New York : 1967, Price \$1.75

DONALD Zagoria's purpose in writing this volume was a limited one: to fill "a glaring gap" in the worldwide discussion of the Vietnam war. The assessment is based on the situation obtaining around the middle of last year; later developments have brought in new equations, no doubt, but the picture has not changed so much as to make all the author's assumptions irrelevant.

Believing that a vital aid to a proper understanding of the complex situation thrown up by the war which has been going on for many years has been largely ignored, Zagoria sets out to analyse the interactions. "among the different Communist protagonists directly involved in the struggle".....these being of course North Vietnam, China, the Soviet Union, and "last but not least" the South Vietnam National Liberation Front spear-heading the popular struggle against aggression. He sets out to show that while all these forces are united in hoping for the ultimate triumph of the Vietnamese people against the Americans and their puppets, the interests and points of view of all four do not necessarily coincide but are in fact often conflicting. It seems obvious enough that when several peoples and governments are involved in any given situation, even if they be on the same side, differences in aims and approach are inevitable; national interests, which are after all the most decisive factor in such situations, need not necessarily be

identical. Given the existing conflict among the Communist countries themselves, such divergences are to be expected. In a much looser sense, do we not know of various countries subscribing to the concept of non-alignment differing violently on many vital international issues?

While the framework Zagoria has chosen may be a matter of general knowledge, the importance of his book lies in the painstaking research that has gone into his analysis of how precisely these conflicts and contradictions arise and what their total import is both for the future of Vietnam and for larger global politics. In view of the limitation he has set upon himself, the author deals only cursorily with the pivotal American role in this complicated human drama of unprecedented dimensions.

In the period of the "bipolar world," that is, in the years from the origins of the Cold War to the time of the split in the international Communist movement, when the two super-powers confronted each other and the grim shadow of this gigantic confrontation and the consequent seeming imminence of a nuclear holocaust fell on every world problem however small by itself, the focus of the power struggle was Europe, and both sides tended to treat Asian and African problems as merely peripheral. One may not agree with Zagoria's sweeping conclusion that Russia cared little "about the people or the local

Communists in Vietnam unless what happened there influenced developments in Europe or in Russia's relations with the United States or China." But it can hardly be denied that in that period the struggle of the Vietnamese people for freedom did not evoke the same responses from the super-powers as it does now; this is quite true of both the Soviet Union and the United States. One explanation may well be that so long as Moscow and Peking functioned with mutual understanding and respect, the Soviet Union felt that it was for China to pay greater attention to the liberation struggle at its door-step; in any case in that period the Soviet Union was rendering massive economic and military assistance to China, and it must have legitimately expected that China in turn would render the maximum assistance possible to the people of Vietnam.

However, the split in the international Communist movement and the increasingly belligerent and self-righteous position taken by the rulers in Peking changed all that. While Zagoria points to the comparative indifference of the Soviet Union in this earlier period to what was happening in Vietnam, he does not also fail to point to the reluctance of the Chinese to permit any escalation of the conflict or to get directly involved in a military confrontation with the United States.

Writing at a time when the Paris negotiations were not even dreamt of, Zagoria says: "As the war intensified in mid-1967, it seems likely that Russia will step up its military aid to North Vietnam, while continuing to avoid a direct confrontation with the United States. Moscow is anxiously seeking to estimate how far the United States will go in escalating the war and is beginning to appraise its policy anew. It remains unclear to what extent the Soviet-American detente will be undermined by the continuing escalation of the war." Earlier on he says that in the last four months of 1966 Moscow undertook a major reassessment of its foreign policy,

particularly its relations with China and the United States, as a result mainly of the ominous developments in China and partly of a glimmer of hope that the USA might be willing to take a more realistic view of the world situation than till then.

One may however wonder if Zagoria has not taken a rather simplified view of the matter when he claims that the Soviet Union was compelled "to begin making long-avoided choices—particularly the one between Peking and Washington..." Earlier reluctance to make such a choice, according to the author, was due to the belief in Moscow that the pro-Soviet faction in China could assert itself; and the choice was made when it was realised that Mao Tse-tung was on top at last. It is difficult to accept this theory unquestioningly although it sounds plausible enough, as it is obviously not easy even for the best and the most competent among the world's "China-watchers" to state with any finality what precisely is happening in that country today.

In any case it seems difficult to believe that the moment Moscow felt that the pro-Soviet faction had lost ground in China it decided to chum up with Johnson and Co. Such an assessment amounts to reading too much into Soviet efforts to avoid what must inevitably become a nuclear confrontation. Peking does not mind a nuclear war so long as it does not come into the picture in the first instance. One wonders if the author, despite his capacity for understanding the interaction of world forces, has not subconsciously allowed himself to be influenced by Peking's theories which, shorn of verbiage and abusive epithets, amount to the same thing.

This does not mean, however, that Zagoria has not tried to find out the scope and extent of the internal conflicts in China over Vietnam. He divides the rulers of China into three distinct groups—Hawks, Doves and Dawks. The Hawks are "the hard-line group among the professional military that wanted a tougher line on Vietnam"; and

the Doves the "soft line group within the party that wanted to turn inward and concentrate on building China's economy rather than expanding China's energies to promote revolutions abroad and in confronting both the super-powers at once." The group which has been victorious so far is that of the Dawks or centrists—"the Maoist, anti-Soviet faction (which) believes that the struggle with revisionism at home and abroad should take priority over everything else, including the war in Vietnam and the struggle against the United States." This group "rejected the army's demand for a hard-line policy on Vietnam because it would have both greatly increased the risks of war with the United States and meant temporary reconciliation with Russia on Russia's terms."

This Maoist group, holding the key position in the national leadership, was content to "help" the Vietnamese people with ceaseless noisy propaganda; it ruled out active intervention, especially after the massive American entry into Vietnam, but at the same time kept on applying pressure on North Vietnam not to compromise. The Chinese advice to both Hanoi and the Viet Cong was "to prepare for a long war of attrition in which substantial help from other Communist states, including China, should not be expected, and in which the Viet Cong should assume the defensive until the balance of forces eventually changes."

The Russians, in contrast, have on the one hand provided massive military assistance to North Vietnam in its hour of peril and on the other done all they could to bring about negotiations aimed at peace, leaving the basis of starting such negotiations to be laid down by Hanoi. Whatever the outcome of the peace effort, it must be obvious that the Soviet Union has played a constructive role on Vietnam unlike China.

In conclusion Zagoria finds that "the present realities...are more conducive to a Soviet-American understanding than to either a Sino-Soviet or Sino-American accommodation." He

however concedes frankly that "this situation could easily change under circumstances that are not yet foreseeable." One interpretation of the recent Soviet offer of arms to Pakistan is that Moscow has kept in the view the possibility of a Sino-American ganging up and is moving to win over the neighbouring country as one of the steps necessary to prepare for such an eventuality. Only time can show whether this reading is valid.

Hanoi's position is naturally dictated by national self-interest, keeping in view the goal of reunification of Vietnam. Zagoria says that Hanoi almost unwillingly accepted the 1954 Geneva agreements which created an artificial division between North and South Vietnam. The subsequent failure of the world powers to get the agreements honestly implemented, resulting in current massive American presence and aggression, did not make the task of those who desired peace in South-East Asia easy. The author thinks that Hanoi cleverly played off Moscow and Peking against each other for its own purposes. What is clear however is that the North Vietnam Government has throughout adopted a realistic position and has tried not to allow the Sino-Soviet rift to harm its own national interests and the interests of the South Vietnamese people. It did not alienate itself from Peking despite the patent reluctance of the Chinese rulers to come to the help of the Vietnamese people; and it did not allow its closeness to Peking to prevent it from seeking and accepting massive military assistance from Moscow. All this appears to prove that in Hanoi the moderates have prevailed over the extremists.

Zagoria says that "There is some evidence to suggest that both Hanoi and the NLF are considering a settlement on the basis of minimal rather than maximal goals." If the United States had a different leadership perhaps this willingness of Hanoi to work out an honourable settlement would have been taken advantage of; but that was not to be.

Zagoria belongs to the category of American liberals who do not approve of the bombing of North Vietnam or of the deliberate policy of escalation but who firmly believe that American presence in Asia is very necessary—a view with which most enlightened and peace-loving people in the world are bound to disagree. He says: "I do not favour withdrawal from Asia." He is "convinced that it is necessary to bring about a balance of power in Asia" and "the only nation now capable of

doing that is the United States." When one starts with the basic assumption that America has a divinely ordained mission to occupy other people's territories and to bring about "a balance of power," one's understanding of events is bound to be clouded.

Zagoria's quarrel is not with Johnson's aims but only with his methods. To Asians the difference between the two can only seem to be that between tweedledum and tweedledee. Unless the basic proposition is accepted that it is for the people of each

country to decide their own fate and to govern themselves as they like and that no power is entitled to interfere in the affairs of any country however small and weak, objective and fair assessment of situations is not possible. This is the weakness from which Zagoria's approach suffers, although it must be said to his credit that his book throws a great deal of light on the murky sphere of international relations and his presentation of his point of view leaves little to be desired.

CZECHOSLOVAK DEBATE

(Continued from Page 30)

the working class, of all the working people of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, is manifested. Is it really necessary to wait until the counter-revolutionary forces become masters of the situation in Czechoslovakia to start the struggle against them?

"The fact that the anti-socialist forces continue the offensive, although at times resorting to camouflage, has not escaped the attention of all who follow the political situation in Czechoslovakia. Thus the authors of the notorious 'Two Thousand Words' issued an 'explanation' that they allegedly did not have in mind the undermining of the fundamentals of socialism in Czechoslovakia. However, these and similar tactical ruses are no less dangerous and will mislead no one, as the former essence of the activities of anti-Soviet elements remains. This, incidentally, is brought to one's attention by the article in *Prace* on July 20, the same day the materials of the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia were published. This article contains a direct hint as to the desirability of a revision of Czechoslovakia's foreign policy.

This article claims that the leadership of the

Communist Party of Czechoslovakia could be compelled 'to revise certain basic aspects of foreign policy' due to 'the resistance and disagreement of Communist and Workers' parties.' It stresses that a conflict with certain socialist allies is beginning, against Czechoslovakia's wishes.

"We, of course, do not regard the *Prace* articles as Party documents; nevertheless, the appearance in it of such provocative deliberations at a time when the Czechoslovak Communist Party leadership assures the fraternal parties of its loyalty to allied commitments, cannot but arouse concern.

"The Presidium of the Czechoslovak Communist Party Central Committee says in its document that the Party leadership is interested in that 'our relations not grow any worse,' and that it is prepared 'to facilitate the quietening of the situation to the benefit of socialism and the unity of the socialist countries'. This statement does have, of course, an importance of its own. However, one cannot fail to see that cardinal issues of principle raised in the letter from the Warsaw meeting participants to the Czechoslovak Communist Party Central Committee, remain, in effect, open."...

CAN A COUNTRY HAVE MORE THAN ONE COMMUNIST PARTY?—VI

(Continued from Page 34)

come must agree beforehand to abide by the conclusions of such a World Conference; even if the conclusions are not wholly unanimous and are subscribed by the overwhelming majority. The Comintern need not be revived. But the democratic centralism of the World Congress, must be agreed to without detracting from the independence and equality of each party in relation to any other party within the framework of the obligation of proletarian internationalism.

99. The whole world situation is undergoing deep-seated changes, which also affect us as a Party and as a country. The imperialists are stepping up their counter-revolutionary attacks.

It is time for all socialist forces in India to find a common platform of thought and action, while adhering to the basic slogan "Workers of the World, Unite." Since that slogan was raised in 1848, one third of the world has overthrown capitalism and

gone over to socialism. The whole colonial empire of the international monopoly capital of the imperialists has fallen to pieces. If we all unite, the next step to world revolution and total annihilation of imperialism and exploitation is near at hand.

This is the beginning of the dialogue—not its end. It will end only when the unity of the working-class and all the socialist and Communist forces is achieved.

(To be Concluded Next Week)

CORRECTION

In *Mainstream* last week (July 27), in Dange's article "Can a Country Have More than One Communist Party?—V" on page 30, Column 1, Sub-section 57, last para, line 5, please read "1921" in place of "1961".

MOSCOW TO PINDI—II

(Continued from Page 12)

of 1965 is significant in many ways. It marked the end of the assumption that a conflict over Kashmir need not spill over into a regular war between the two countries.

It also showed that the old calculation of America that it could totally regulate and control Pakistani affairs particularly foreign policy went wrong; arms which had been stockpiled by US in Pakistan for some future war against Communism were found being used against India, a power which by 1965 had come under considerable American influence. The wave of anti-Americanism which was noticed in India in September 1965 with the display of captured Patton Tanks was a measure of the bankruptcy of the American policy in this sub-continent.

It was clear that in such a situation America was not in a position to take the initiative for any Indo-Pak settlement. This was the role which historically came to Moscow, and Mr. Kosygin played it with consummate skill at Tashkent.

At Tashkent, Mr. Kosygin's greatest handicap was that the Soviet Government had not yet been able to establish mutual confidence with Pakistan. Although he did broach the idea of a Kashmir settlement taking the Cease-fire line as the final boundary, he could make no headway because in the Pak view of things, the Soviet Union had armed India against Pakistan. Moscow's anxiety to cultivate Pakistan was clear at that time from the fact that no Soviet journal, not to speak of any official spokesman, characterised Pakistan as aggressor.

Moreover, the open sympathy for the Pakhtoonistan movement has not figured in recent years in Moscow. Rather the emphasis has been to bring Pakistan closer to Afghanistan. As a by-product of this policy has come the reported offer by the Soviet Government to Government of India to persuade Rawalpindi to let the overland trade between India and Afghanistan resume

across Pak territory.

In the east, the Soviet Union has been scrupulous not to express itself on the burning controversy about the demand for East Pakistan's autonomy. Here too the emphasis has been on closer Indo-Pak economic link-up. It is quite on the cards that Moscow will give its support for any initiative for a joint development project for the harnessing of mighty rivers like Brahmaputra. Mr. Kosygin's reference to the Indo-Pak talks on Ganga waters—over which there has been excitement in New Delhi—was inspired by the same anxiety that the two countries should get involved in as many mutual commitments as possible so that peace and stability could be maintained in the sub-continent. If some circles with imagination urge Moscow to finance such a joint project, one would be tempted to forecast that the response would be positive.

The Soviet's overriding interest today seems to be not to let any clash of arms take place in this subcontinent. For one thing, such a clash may very well result in Soviet arms being used on both sides. More urgently, Moscow is worried that in case of a conflict, not only USA but China too would try to fish in such troubled waters. And in such an eventuality, the Soviet Union's own interest might be jeopardised. Thus the maintenance of peace on this subcontinent coincides with the Soviet Union's current policy approach.

One of the reasons for Indian misgivings about the latest Soviet decision to let Pakistan buy Soviet arms is that this may denote a shift in Moscow's attachment from India to Pakistan; the argument seems to be that if one tries to become friendly to Pakistan one *ipso facto* has to cool off in one's ardour for India. This logic does not always hold good in international affairs, the less so in the case of the Soviet Union, because of the very special reasons why Moscow cannot afford to let India down.

The long historic association between the Soviet Government's anti-imperialist policy and India's independence movement may not be of any relevance for cynical observers. Nor would they perhaps be impressed by the fact that Moscow's economic links with India have been strengthened considerably in recent years. There are two other factors which power-politics would demand of any Foreign Ministry expert in Moscow to see to it that India is not alienated. Firstly, the US interest in India is considerable; the old Indian allergy to US commitments was very much gone on the morrow of the Chinese attack; any worsening of Indo-Soviet relations would therefore be promptly taken advantage of by USA, and Moscow knows that.

Secondly, if the Soviet Union is found to have let India down, many voices in New Delhi would demand a tit-for-tat strategy and may try to make up with China, and Peking may be too ready to settle with India as a deal against the Soviet Union; this too could not possibly be beyond Moscow's calculations. Thirdly, it is quite possible that an embittered India may line up with both USA and China in the event of a Sino-American confrontation against the Soviet Union.

For all these reasons, the chances of any weakening of Indo-Soviet ties are very slender. Rather Moscow would strive—as could be seen from her present policy—to carry both India and Pakistan together in an amity drive in South Asia. By cultivating Pakistan to the point of letting her buy Soviet arms, Moscow hopes to gain a lever in Pakistani affairs. And the more it succeeds in that objective, the more confident would it be to force Pakistan to a politics of peace and goodwill towards India, while striving to demonstrate to New Delhi the wholesome effect of such a policy.

In a triangular contest, with Washington and Peking as its rivals, would Moscow succeed in establishing its decisive grip over Rawalpindi? Only time alone would show.

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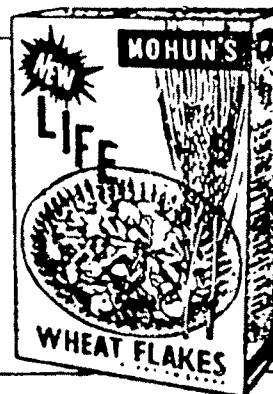
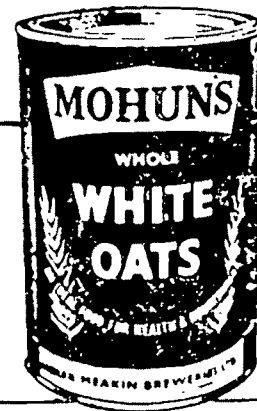
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Mainstream

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 1974

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on
Czechoslovakia

Vested
in
Collaboration

*After Srinagar:
National Integration*



No government can afford to ignore the urges of the common people. After all, democracy has its basis on those very urges and if any government flouts them, it is pushed aside and other governments take it over.

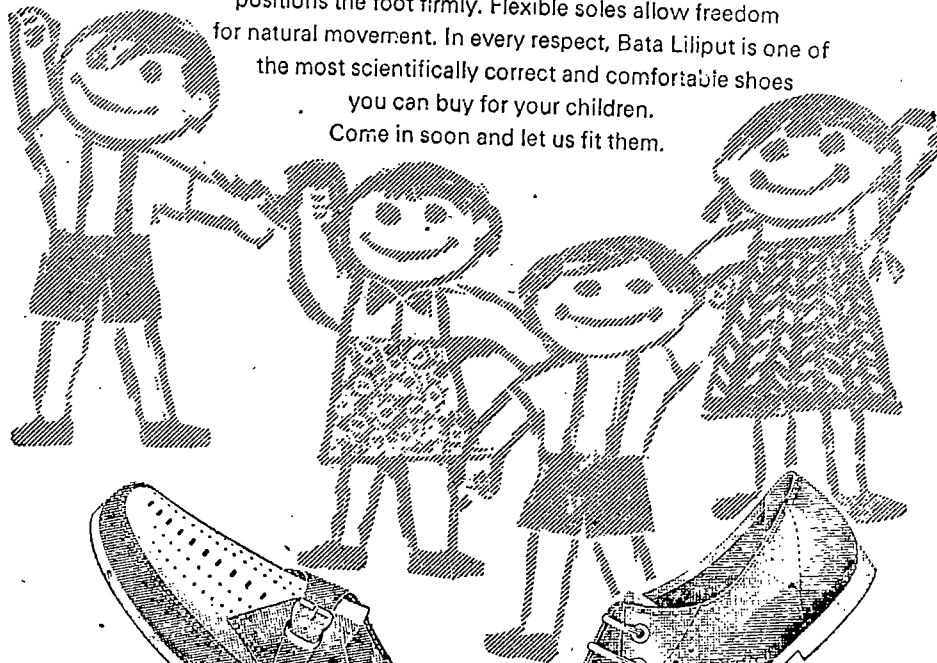
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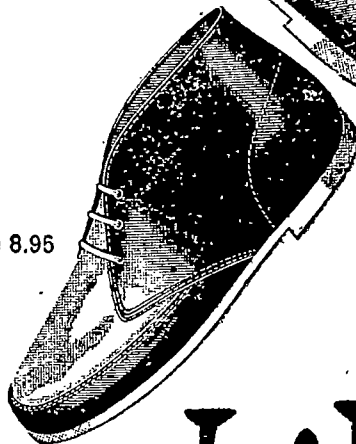
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LACK OF VIGILANCE

FOR years there have been protests in this country against various American foundations, so-called research teams and other agencies and individuals being allowed to engage in shady activities not only in vital spheres like education and industry but also in sensitive border areas. But the Government of India has consistently refused to take notice of these goings-on till exposures are made either in the American Press or in US Congressional committees. Long before the Press in America published details of the activities of CIA-financed organisations in India and other developing countries, many of our political parties and educationists and others had drawn the Government's attention to them, but all their efforts to get the administration moving were of no avail.

It is indeed poor compliment to our intelligence services and to the alertness of those whose job it is to rule the country that facts relating to espionage activities by Americans on India's borders have to be revealed in America before our Government and Parliament become aware of them. That American spy agencies are in a position to

conduct their nefarious activities without fear of interference on our soil also shows that there are influential persons in the seats of power who must be in collusion with these elements. The threat to national security thus arises from two sources, the more dangerous being undoubtedly the stooges of the US espionage system within this country.

It is no secret that the American agencies concerned have secured a foothold in many of our universities through liberal supply of funds for so-called research and study projects under the auspices of mystery-ridden foundations. Many of the research projects undertaken are known to have no relevance to India's needs; in other words, the American agencies by financing such projects aim at two things—first, getting Indian talent utilized for the pursuit of studies for the benefit of the US; and secondly, winning over Indian scholars and intellectuals by means of blandishments. It is also well known that similar inducements are offered to Indian journalists; those who succumb to temptation in turn oblige their patrons by prostituting their professional talent and standing for furthering American political-military aims in India and Asia. The public is familiar with the much-publicised "Peace Crops" volunteers sent out after thorough training to engage in espionage and subversion in the garb of rendering altruistic social service in remote rural pockets. That the Naga problem would not have assumed its present dimensions but for Western sponsored subversion in the earlier years is common knowledge. John Smith's diary has thrown considerable light on the CIA's efforts to secure willing agents even in the armed forces, not to speak of the bureaucracy and the politicians. There have been frequent reports of Western spies sneaking into our border areas or into Nepal, and their purpose must be obvious. All these developments, which were not sudden or altogether unknown, have not however moved our Government to swift and effective action. On the other hand, the tendency has been to hide unwillingness to act behind vague phrases like being "seized of the problem" and "carefully looking into" the charges.

The latest in the series is the real purpose of US "research" programmes in the Himalayan border areas. The source of Government's knowledge was as usual the revelations made in the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The revelation was that the "sociology research" programmes sponsored by the University of California were in fact financed by the US Defence Depart-

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ment and that the object of the project was to collect information of defence interest. The Himalayan border has been sensitive for nearly ten years and the armed forces have been constantly on guard throughout its length in view of the continuing threat from China. It is to be presumed that our intelligence services are also very much in existence in this delicate region. Yet the Government has to depend on "revelations" in an American Senate committee for its information on what is going on under its very nose. If Members of Parliament feel agitated and express doubts about the capacity of the Government to forestall such mischief they can hardly be blamed in the circumstances.

While the Prime Minister has repeated the worn-out promise about looking very carefully into the matter, the Government has failed to provide a satisfactory answer to the crucial question as to whether we have any agency to screen such innocent-looking American projects. Sri Bhagat's statement that the policy so far had been not to allow foreigners in the area except bona fide research workers will have to be taken with a large dose of salt. The Govern-

ment itself, it is known, has no machinery for checking the bona fides of the foreign foundations operating in this country or to keep track of their activities here. The patent fact is that any American group claiming to be engaged in any kind of research has been allowed free access to areas which in any other country would have been the most heavily guarded and would not be accessible to foreigners, however friendly.

If the Government is really serious about ending such espionage, it must first of all order all Americans in or near the border regions to pack up and get out. It must tell the US Government that we need no more of their researchers and volunteers and experts in this country. All the other American "scholars" dispersed in many parts of the country must be immediately screened by a responsible committee set up by Parliament, and those about whom there is the slightest doubt must be sent back home. It is no use blaming the Americans for taking advantage of our own slackness. And so long as nothing is done to end this slackness in the vital area of national security, our freedom will necessarily remain in constant peril.

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

IMPORTANCE OF BEING GEORGE

It is difficult to believe that Sri George Fernandes' move to relinquish his seat in the Lok Sabha is entirely due either to frustration over the limitations of the Opposition in Parliament or to disgust with "the mechanics of winning and keeping one's seat." Few in the country, least of all active politicians, ever had any illusions about the effectiveness of the Opposition parties in Parliament and the Legislatures so long as they were unable to forge a united front based on common economic and social aims.

Though quite young, Sri Fernandes had been long enough in public life to have been aware of this major limiting factor at the time he decided to challenge Reaction in what had till then been believed to be one of its strongholds. By inflicting a crushing defeat on Sri S. K. Patil he demonstrated that his faith in

the people was not misplaced. Those who discussed with him his future role in national politics in the light of his entry into the Lok Sabha know that, despite his awareness of the limitations from which Parliament as well as his own party suffered, he was quite optimistic about efforts for the forging of a Left united front in the Lok Sabha.

True, at that time the rout of the Congress in several States and the steep fall in its majority in Parliament had created an atmosphere of hope and expectation for the forces of the Left. Developments in the course of the last seventeen months have, however, changed the political picture almost totally. It can hardly be doubted that much of the blame for the present depressing situation rests squarely on the parties of the Left, including primarily the one to which Sri Fernandes belongs, for these parties missed

opportunity after opportunity of seeking and establishing mutual understanding on aims and methods to achieve the minimum economic goals all of them can be assumed to have in view.

Whatever the intentions, the effect of their varying postures and activities has been to strengthen the forces of Right reaction including even those of communalism and to weaken the chances of Leftist consolidation. Irrespective of the equations in the States these parties could well have worked out a broad understanding in the Houses of Parliament and worked purposefully together; this they patently failed to do by their inability to appreciate fully the role they could collectively play in Parliament in the interests of the common people. The compulsions of politics at the State level were on the other hand allowed to block the growth of a united Leftist

Opposition in Parliament.

Sri Fernandes has referred to the 'more fundamental' question of 'priorities for men like me,' namely, whether it is more fruitful to work among the people or spend one's time in legislatures. He is no doubt right in declaring that a party in power can use the legislature for doing good to the people, while a party in Opposition can only raise hopes without being able to deliver the goods. But this is an aspect of the working of parliamentary democracy which is quite well known; it surely did not need months of actual experience as a member of Parliament for Sri Fernandes to arrive at this conclusion. It may be mentioned that in none of his speeches before or after the General Election did Sri Fernandes himself raise hopes among the people; he was indeed quite realistic about the role he could play as also his party and the rest of the Leftist Opposition. At the same time, he himself had hopes in another direction, namely, of making purposeful efforts towards bringing the parties of the Left closer together so that by the time of the next General Election the people could expect to be able to make a fair choice. If today Sri Fernandes feels frustrated and desires to quit the Lok Sabha, it can only be concluded that he finds himself unable to carry out the task he had given himself at the outset. The question whether this is due to the shortcomings of Parliament or to the conflicting pulls within his own party remains open.

A loyal member of his party, Sri Fernandes cannot be expected

to discuss in public any differences he may have with the rest of the SSP leadership. But to political observers who had noted his early speeches against the Jana Sangh and its politics, it seems fairly clear that the differences between Sri Fernandes and the dominant section of the SSP leadership after Ram Manohar Lohia are not of a negligible kind. It is also well known that he had differences with the dominant section of the party leadership on the attitude to be adopted towards the divisive Shiv Sena.

In the Lok Sabha itself, Sri Fernandes has done exceedingly well for a junior member. His contribution to the exposure of CIA activities in India will be remembered. Except where the party line prevented him from expressing himself forcefully, he has been effective in drawing attention sharply to the many weaknesses in the Government's economic policies. As parliamentarian he has shown dignity of bearing and restraint well beyond his years and in sharp contrast to some of his senior colleagues in the SSP. If he has not been able to play an even more purposeful role, it was entirely because he was not in a position to overcome the limitations imposed by dominant opinion in his own party and by the equations worked out by certain of his more influential colleagues either with other Opposition parties or with sections of those in the seats of power. Thus his quarrel would seem to be not so much with the parliamentary system as with some of his colleagues in the SSP. Only time can show the correct-

ness of this assessment.

Sri Madhu Limaye has rightly said that the election of popular leaders like Sri Fernandes is like a solemn contract between the electorate and the elected, and that Sri Fernandes cannot violate his obligation to the people and make a present of the South Bombay seat to Sri Patil. But it is hardly enough to say this and leave it at that. Presumably efforts will be made to prevail upon Sri Fernandes not to press his resignation. But this too will not be enough. The questions Sri Fernandes has raised, directly and indirectly, await satisfactory answers. One does wish he had framed these questions candidly, so that not only the leadership of the SSP but the entire spectrum of Left leadership in the country could have given thought to them seriously and sought the answers. But the primary responsibility at the moment rests on the SSP and those who guide its policies.

So far as the people are concerned, there can be no doubt that they would not like Sri Fernandes to vacate his seat irrespective of whether the seat will be regained by Sri Patil. While he has ample reason to feel disillusioned about being able to play the role of a bridge between the SSP and other parties of the Left, it would be unwise of him to give up the effort which has to continue in earnest if consolidation of the progressive parties and groups is to be achieved at any time in the future. He is one of the handful fitted for this task by reason of his natural frankness and his dedication, and by reason of his understanding of

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what divides the Left and what can unite it. His great talent as an organiser should prove a great asset in this task, provided his party gives him a certain measure of elbow-room to seek areas of agreement between the SSP and the rest of the Left.

All this does not mean that parliamentary institutions as they exist and function in this country are satisfactory; far from it. Persons who entered Parliament or the State Legislatures in the hope that they could expedite measures in the popular interest and prevent administrative or legislative action against the interests of the people, are bound to feel frustrated when they find that theirs is a voice in the wilderness,

that the majority can get through whatever it wants to irrespective of popular reaction and that procedural forms and red tape can tie every issue of importance into knots. But this is not a problem that can be solved by the resignation in protest of a solitary member of Parliament. It is a problem that has to be discussed by all progressive, democratic parties and elements in the country in order to find a way out. In creating an awakening on these lines, Sri Fernandes, as MP, can play a useful part.

It is to be fervently hoped that the SSP leadership will not only succeed in persuading Sri Fernandes to stay on in Parliament but will give thought to

their own actions and attitudes which are capable of causing frustration among dedicated members of the party and take early steps to remove shortcomings. Other Leftist parties have the responsibility of looking upon the latest developments within the SSP with sympathy and understanding and help to the extent they can to enable the party to take its rightful place in a broad Left front. They will do well to remember that it is men like Sri Fernandes with roots among the people and with idealism unimpaired who can play the most decisive role in bringing about consolidation of the forces of the Left in the country today.

August 6 —C.N. Chitta Ranjan

Static Attitude in Dynamic Situation

K. P. KARUNAKARAN

THE present controversy relating to the supply of Soviet arms to Pakistan has done considerable harm to India's interests. But if it sets in motion a realistic discussion on India's external relations, it has fulfilled at least one useful function. So far, however, there is no evidence to conclude that it has done so.

One of the most important aspects of India's foreign policy is in its relations with China. Now a question may be asked: Is there any shift in China's external relations and a change in regard to her role and status in international affairs? Obviously, the Government of India is not going to be briefed by the Chinese Government on this matter. It is also unfortunate that although the Indian Government has not broken diplomatic relations with China, it does not have relations at ambassadorial level with China. In some respects this narrows down India's contact with China.

I am not aware what reports the Government is receiving from its representatives and what its own assessment of the situation in that country is. But a careful perusal of the published news convinces me that the Indian assessment of the China of 1962 is no more valid. We should wake up from the apathy of sticking to that analysis as we were woken up by the armed conflict from our earlier analysis of that country.

China today is moving towards the status of a satisfied, if not a conservative, power. She is accepted by powerful elements in the United States and they will compel the US Government to recognise very soon the new regime. Not only Senator Fullbright and the Presidential candidate McCarthy, but even the Vice-President and the Presidential candidate, Humphrey, is moving in that direction. Canada may very soon recognize the Government of China. The Canadian Government has already

called for a Conference of all the Nuclear Powers including China. The Americans and the Russians know that without China's participation, the Treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons will be a dead letter. One of the provisions of the Treaty is that a nuclear power must not help a non-nuclear power to make its bombs. It will be ridiculous if the Soviet Union, the US and the UK are bound by it and China is not. And China will not undertake this single international obligation, if it is not fully accepted as a member of the international community. In other words, the Chinese will not accept any obligation unless it confers some rights on them.

All these factors lead to the direction of the Chinese becoming a respectable member of the international community. This is the reason for India to normalize her relations with China and not the proposed supply of Soviet

arms to Pakistan.

It is an irony that when China was an outcaste from the international community, India was championing her case in the UN and elsewhere, but when China is being fully accepted by other members India is behaving as if China is an outcaste.

Today practically no other government accepts the Indian view of China. During the controversy on Soviet supply of arms to Pakistan, it has often been stated that a nation has no permanent friends or permanent enemies. The emphasis is not having permanent friends, because it is suggested, that the Soviet Union is no more a friend of India. What is forgotten is neither China nor Pakistan is a permanent enemy of India. The days are gone when we can envisage a thirty-year or a hundred-year war against China or Pakistan.

It is doubtful China will oblige the extremist and irresponsible sections of the Indian people by taking a permanently hostile attitude towards India. Neither should the Government of India oblige them, by taking a permanently hostile attitude towards China.

What About Pakistan ?

A question may be asked: What about Pakistan ? In one sense it is more difficult for India to develop cordial relations with Pakistan than with China. India is the major concern of Pakistan's

foreign policy and unlike China it has no global policies which can have a bearing on its relations with India to move it in an unexpectedly cordial direction. Moreover, Pakistan wants the revision of the *status quo* in relation to Kashmir and it is prepared to pay a high price for that revision. Neither the Indian Government nor the Indian public is in a mood to make any such revision if it can be helped.

From these, however, one need not jump to the conclusion that Pakistan is India's "permanent" enemy. Unlike China, Pakistan is not a great centre of power in relation to India. The policy-makers of that country are aware of it. On the one hand, a limited Soviet supply of arms increases Pakistan's military strength. On the other it reduces its capacity to manoeuvre in the diplomatic field. One of the dramatic statements of President Ayub was that he was not getting American arms to keep them under cotton wool and that he would use them if necessary. And he did in 1965. But unfortunately for him, when the US suspended arms supply to Pakistan, he could not pursue the war vigorously. What India should examine now is to what extent the Soviet arms would indirectly tie up Pakistan's hands.

The Soviet Union is having a tremendous diplomatic victory in Turkey and in Pakistan when the US position in these countries are being weakened. She will not

give up these advantages because the leaders of Jana Sangh and Swatantra want her to give it up on the ground that they are not in favour of weakening the US anywhere. But what the Indian Government should do is to try to take the best advantage of the Soviet Union's increasing presence in Pakistan.

This may also mean that we may have to make concessions to Pakistan. The statement which is often repeated in this country is that no concession will satisfy the Pakistan Government. But the Pakistan Government is not all that powerful. It cannot ignore international realities and the pressure of the foreign governments on which it is dependent. Moreover, internally also the Pakistan government has its own difficulties. There is a limit to which it can drive its people to a mood of permanent hostility towards India and make them pay the price for it.

Very often it is assumed in this country that India is helpless in influencing the events in Pakistan and the policies of foreign governments which are "on the side of Pakistan". This is true only because of the bankruptcy of the Indian foreign policy-makers who are incapable of taking a flexible approach. But rigidity and remaining static in a changing world also has not helped us in any way. At least that is precisely the reason to make a move.

ECONOMIC NOTEBOOK

VESTED INTEREST IN COLLABORATION

NEARLY three years ago a move was initiated in the Planning Commission by the late S.G. Barve, then Member, Industries, to draw up a comprehensive report on the existing state of

consultancy and engineering services in the country and what should be done to develop and strengthen these crucial services if any real advance was to be made towards self-reliance in the

field of industrial development. That report is yet to see the light of day because nobody seemed to be serious about it in the subsequent period.

Enquiries made in the Plan-

ning Commission last week showed that the report in question, which had reached the stage of a draft two years ago, had been pigeon-holed somewhere and was collecting dust. It has since been hurriedly taken off the shelf, though no one yet knows what will be done with it.

The highlight of the draft report, which came as somewhat of a pleasant surprise—even to those who had prepared it was that India already possessed consultancy and design engineering services of a high order but they were not getting even a modest chance to display their talent and competence in the industrial life and development of the country.

The logic and compulsions of the philosophy of dependence on foreign aid and foreign collaboration have made it inevitable that national talent should receive no encouragement. The aid-givers in every case also insist for the sake of their long-term business interests and the high returns they extract from it that their own consultants, designers and know-how must have precedence in projects. This is the basis of the turnkey arrangements agreed to in the case of all important projects, whether in the public or private sector.

Such arrangements find massive support from the top civilian bureaucracy. The bureaucracy does not like Indian technical experts to acquire prestige and authority, leading to a weakening of the bureaucratic steel frame in the Government. Turnkey arrangements with foreign creditors also means so much less work for the bureaucrat, while it can certainly be of personal benefit to him in various ways. The result has been that the coming up of various projects, while they might give the superficial impression of economic growth and progress, represents far from anything like self-sustaining and self-reliant capability and potential for further development. Hence the peculiar compulsion for as well as vested interest in turnkey arrangements with foreigners and neglect of Indian talent and expertise even in areas where it already exists

and is crying for an opportunity for creative work.

The situation has become particularly bad in the last three years of economic stagnation when simultaneously the frustrating philosophy of 'more aid to end aid' became strident. Though this philosophy in its crude form is at present in disfavour, the practice all round has not changed at all but has worsened.

The rejection of American terms for aid for the Bokaro steel project and withdrawal of the aid request on that account (the American demand for foreign consultancy and design engineering having a dominant role and the Indian side being accorded a secondary and subservient role was a crucial issue of dispute) represented the high-water mark in the effort towards the close of Jawaharlal Nehru's life to shake off dependence in this vital field. This decision was widely acclaimed at that time, specially in technical and scientific circles, and might well have become the beginning of a new and more vital stage in the economic development of the country. This might have been so all the more because it occurred at the right moment when the first stage of the processes of industrialisation had been largely completed. A fairly large and diversified industrial structure had been built up and considerable experience in the construction of modern and large projects had been acquired. At the same time, technical training and education had made considerable headway and a large pool of young engineers had been created to undertake responsibility in the programme of further industrial development. All that was needed therefore was to mobilise the material and human resources created within the economy up to a point and harness them to a well-conceived and integrated programme.

It might still have been necessary—and is still necessary—to acquire some of the latest processes and know-how from abroad for certain of the more sophisticated areas. But as experience has shown,

wherever it has been allowed to be tried—for instance in fertilizers and alloy steels and certain chemicals—these have been freely available in the international market at not too great a cost, and it should not have been very difficult to find sufficient foreign exchange resources for the purpose. The processes and know-how thus acquired would not have tied us down to costly turnkey arrangements of any kind and perpetuated dependence on foreign sources, but would have been integrated with talent and expertise within the country and become part of the national resources.

The withdrawal of the request for US aid for Bokaro, however, proved only a flash in the pan. It never grew up into a firm policy to be carried out with boldness and imagination. On the contrary, as the overall economic situation began to deteriorate rapidly and planning itself ran into difficulties while the pressure of foreign aid-givers and creditors mounted, the will to go on such basis soon wilted in favour of abject acceptance of whatever terms the aid-givers would set if only they would keep on offering more and more aid. This has resulted not only in halting the growth of Indian consultancy, design and engineering capability but in making these suffer a set-back except in a few rare cases where Indian scientists and engineers have displayed extraordinary tenacity and willingness to take risks in spite of obstructions put in their way. We have thus today the phenomenon of existing consultancy and design organisations, whether in the public sector or as private agencies, being underutilized and young engineers roaming the streets for jobs.

Of late there has been much play on the clause of maximum utilization of Indian fabrication capacity and design and engineering services in foreign aided projects, specially in the public sector. But such arrangements are really an eyewash, particularly so far as consultancy and design services are concerned. The key and the essential design of the plant proper in all cases

are reserved for the foreign agency, and the Indians are only given responsibility for off-site facilities which largely consist of civil works, townships and the like. Even if in flat percentage terms the Indian share may appear respectable, it hardly amounts to much in terms of technique and know-how which remain the monopoly of the foreigner. In the case of collaboration projects in the private sector, the clause on maximum utilization of Indian resources does not extend to consultancy and designing at all but is confined to utilization of Indian fabrication capacity which also the foreign designer has a way of nullifying except in respect of items of no interest to the foreign collaborator, by the simple expedient of laying down specifications which will suit only the foreign supplier.

The most important recommendation in the draft report on consultancy and design services is that in all cases of foreign collaboration and foreign aided projects in both the public and private sectors the onus will rest with the management of the project to prove that the requisite Indian services are not available before foreign agencies are invited to undertake the job. This is the exact opposite of the practice so far under which interested Indian agencies were asked to offer their services and prove they were capable of undertaking them to enable the management to decide if foreign agencies were necessary or not. The result was that the very fact of collaboration and aid precluded the Indian consultancy and design organisation from being accepted as suitable or competent. In case of US AID and World Bank credits there is the additional hurdle that such credits can be given only if consultancy and design agencies approved by them are given the responsibility. This is supposed to safeguard the credits by ensuring that they would be used in the most economic way, but in effect it ensures that only foreign agencies and suppliers of equipment will be considered to the exclusion of Indian resources.

It is noteworthy that even

the simple recommendation contained in the Planning Commission's draft report has met with all kinds of objections and is not finding acceptance. It has remained shelved for over two years on this account, and now that it is proposed to revive its consideration, it may be so qualified and watered down as to lose all meaning in its final form. In actual practice, the powerful bureaucracy will see to it that everything works on the old basis.

The controversial Tata project and the discussions back and forth on it for the last several months, is a case in point. At no stage of its consideration, for instance, was any thought given to its technical conception. Available Indian expertise has not been given a chance to examine the project report even though, admittedly, the so-called latest processes and know-how that the project report claims to incorporate in its structure have only passed the pilot plant stage and have not been commercially tried so far. The fact is that the so-called Allied—IMI process which will dispense with the use of sulphur in the project is also within the grasp of Indian scientists of the Planning and Development Division of the Fertilizer Corporation of India. But a process developed up to pilot stage by a foreign agency is considered by its sponsors fit to be considered though this will never be done in the case of such an offer by an Indian agency. For instance, the P & D Division offered to the US-aided Trombay fertilizer project the use of its catalysts. But the American designers declined to accept them on the ground that they had not yet been used

on a big enough commercial scale over a long period of time, even though they are being used in some of the other running fertilizer plants in the country and are giving superior services than those imported before. The Government for its part has refused to grant ordinary tariff protection to such an important Indian product and insist on the use of Indian catalysts in all fertilizer factories, for it has suddenly become a great votary of competition and wants the Indian item to find a market only in free competition with imports, knowing full well that foreign companies and designers who have built most of the fertilizer plants in the country will patronise only the foreign product in which they themselves hold an interest.

Speaking of the Tata fertilizer project, it is at an interesting stage of consideration. The Planning Commission has reiterated its objections to the project being approved, while the Petroleum & Chemicals Ministry has again sought its approval. There is sharp division in the Cabinet on it, with the Prime Minister sitting on the fence. This is delaying its being put up before the Cabinet for decision. Meanwhile, its supporters have added to the worn-out reasons in favour of it, an ace card—the Shah of Iran. It is being made out that unless this project is approved, there will be no further economic collaboration with that country. If approved, it is contended, vast possibilities of industrial collaboration and trade between the two countries are about to materialise. How far this pressure will work will be known soon.

—Balraj Mehta

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Musings on Czechoslovakia

N. C.

THE events in Czechoslovakia are of great significance to Marxists all over the world. The high-powered propaganda from the West tries to make out that Communism itself has suffered a setback, that its power structure has been badly hit by the developments in Prague. Those who for five decades have tried to scare common people away from Communism by raising the bogey that Marxism could only lead to authoritarianism, have been working over-time to present the Czechoslovak events as a vindication of their claim that freedom and socialism could never go together.

In this chorus, one also finds, strangely enough, those ultra-revolutionaries who have made it a fashion to attack the Soviet Union and the Communist movement, in season and out of season, whether it is over Vietnam or France, Cuba or China. Their argument seems to be that the Czechoslovak developments are essentially a national protest against Russian domination.

A third group of critics has come forward, who see revisionism writ large over the entire horizon; for them the Czechoslovak experiment that has led to relaxation of certain state controls is the logic of Soviet revisionism and now Moscow is paying for its own sins.

Three Aspects

For the common man, this jumble of criticism from the extreme Right to the extreme Left, makes it difficult to understand the essence of the Czechoslovak developments. And it is for the Marxists to dispassionately delineate the elements in the

situation. In fact there are three aspects of the Czechoslovak crisis: first, it has brought out the problem of inter-relation among states under the socialist system; second, it has brought out the question of democracy under socialism; and lastly, it has once again brought to the forefront the question of security of the socialist system vis-a-vis imperialism.

It is perhaps too early to make any firm generalisation on all these questions. And certainly it is not for observers from distance but for the actual participants of the drama to assess these three problems both in detail and in perspective. However, it is important for every Marxist, wherever he may be placed, to make an effort to objectively grasp the implications of any new social development. And in this context even for an Indian Marxist, Czechoslovakia today presents a fascinating problem.

Regarding the question of inter-relationship among socialist states, much has happened in the last two decades that has enriched Marxist understanding on the subject. So long as the Soviet Union continued to be the lone socialist island in the ocean of capitalist world domination, this problem naturally had only a theoretical validity. The Communist thinking at times did touch on the question but it was at that time not a live issue born out of actual experience.

It was only after World War II that the problem assumed practical significance. But the limitation of the situation was that the countries of Eastern Europe liberated from the grip of capitalism by the might of the

Red Army were too small vis-a-vis the Soviet Union to set the norms of relationship between socialist states. In this connection, it is important to bear in mind that while the Soviet Union had come to dominate political, social and economic life of these countries, she had almost bled herself white not only to defend these states but also to help them on a large scale.

Stalin and Yugoslavia

The first rift came in the clash between Stalin and Yugoslavia. Whatever may be the merits of the respective positions taken by the two sides on this issue, it is significant to note that Yugoslavia was physically farthest away from Moscow and in her liberation, the Yugoslav partisan movement contributed relatively more than the resistance movements in other socialist countries did towards their own liberation. In other words, the sense of national participation in the liberation was stronger in the case of Yugoslavia than in the case of other European countries; and this sense of national participation, it should be noted, has both its positive and negative aspects.

But the Soviet differences with Yugoslavia were also not important enough to fix new norms of relationship. The whole debate boiled down to the right or the wrong of the two sides and each almost took a lawyer's view of its own case against the other.

Then came the aftermath of Stalin's exposure by Khrushchov at the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1956. The moment the myth of Stalin's infallibility was removed, there was a tremendous

psychological upheaval in the entire Socialist world; and the crudities of the Stalin regime in relation to the activity of the Communist leadership in these countries naturally came under fire.

Hungarian Crisis

The upheaval took its most violent form in Poland and Hungary. In Poland the swift assertion by the old leadership under Gomulka saved the situation, but in Hungary the Communist Party leadership lost total control and in a state of utter nihilism, outside agencies inspired from the West tried to take advantage of the situation.

There was chaos both on the political and administrative spheres, and it was openly declared by the swift-changing leadership in this turmoil, Hungary would come out of the socialist security orbit and turn neutral; that is, she would become neutral even in the crusade by imperialism against the socialist countries. It was at this stage of complete collapse that the Soviet troops marched in and suppressed the revolt. Technically, Moscow responded to the SOS from Janos Kadar and his section of the Hungarian leadership, but politically it was taken both in the Communist world and of course by the anti-communist camp, as a military intervention by the Soviet Government not to let Hungary go out of the world of socialism.

Incidentally, it may be mentioned in this connection that it was the Chinese Communist leadership which took the most emphatic position in this crisis. It was they who pressed for the Soviet intervention into Hungary, and within a few weeks of the suppression of the Hungarian revolt, Chou En-lai was the first international Communist leader who visited Budapest and denounced counter-revolution. This a point which may be worth noting for those arm-chair revolutionaries of today who while composing panegyrics to Mao Tse-tung have been denouncing Soviet stand on Czechoslovakia.

The 1956 experience was no doubt important for Marxists. On

the one hand, it sharply underlined the dangers of over-control by a socialist super-power in its relation with other socialist states; on the other, it showed that as a rebound, national assertion can take a desperate form, and in the bargain the gains for socialism itself might be placed in jeopardy. The short-cut method of military intervention could obviously be no solution and from then onwards, the question of striking the correct political balance between the socialist states has been on the agenda for the last ten years.

China's Turn

Next came the turn of China. Right from the beginning of Chinese liberation—and according to some authorities, even earlier than that—the Chinese leadership consciously worked, very often secretly, for its own hegemony. Mao Tse-tung has never forgotten the thesis that with her enormous population strength, China must not only have her place in the sun, but should have a preponderating place. Apart from the ideological differences between the Chinese position and the position of the majority of the Socialist States, there was an element of jingoistic nationalism in Peking's line. This was evident even in the days of good relationship in the early fifties. Soon after Twentieth Congress, the Chinese leadership contraposed itself not only against Moscow but against practically the entire socialist world.

Here a new factor appeared in this problem of inter-state relationship under socialism. China being a big power, its relationship with the Soviet Union has a much greater significance than the relationship of the East European States with Moscow. As things stand today, the Chinese have gone in for all the traditional methods of assertion so characteristic of the nation-state stage in history: claims on territory, disputes over boundary, self-contained economy and rivalry in production and administration of armies, glorification of one's own culture to the extent of running down those of others, an angry posture of superiority over neigh-

bours and smaller States, and also a balance-of-power approach in international affairs. The element of solidarity among socialist states is totally lacking in the case of the Chinese foreign policy.

When the Chinese relationship with the rest of the socialist world including the Soviet Union will be finally settled, no doubt an important stage in the development of inter-relationship between the socialist states will be reached. Meanwhile, the question remains open since there are no signs yet of any rapprochement between Peking and the capitals of the socialist world barring the tiny little Tirana.

A by-product of Chinese antagonism towards the rest of the socialist world led by the Soviet Union is the Rumanian approach. In certain sense Rumania has been trying to exploit the difference in the socialist world rather than help in bringing about unification. Here is a case of national interests being taken to the point of contraposing them against the overall interest of the development of socialism.

The Contrast

Viewed in this background, the Czechoslovak crisis has got great significance. First of all, the replacement of the Novotny leadership by the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party touched off the present upheaval. The Novotny leadership in certain ways tried to present before the Czechoslovak people that it alone commands the confidence of the Soviet leadership and it is quite on the cards that Novotny and others tried to mislead the Soviet leadership into believing that the uproar at home is really against the Soviet Union.

However, the immediate change-over was smooth and Dubcek made it quite clear from the beginning that there could be no development of Czechoslovak socialism in alienation from the rest of the socialist world particularly with regard to its relation with Soviet Union. It is significant that General Svoboda was elected

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Women and Property

SATYA PAL DANG

DEMAND for amending the Hindu Succession Act has been raised from various quarters in Punjab and Haryana every now and then ever since its adoption many years ago. On July 25 last the issue was debated in the Haryana Assembly. While many demanded changes in the Act, only Smt. Om Prabha Jain and Sri Abdul Gafar Khan defended the Act and the right granted by it to women to inherit property including agricultural land. In Punjab the Akali Dal, the Jana Sangh and a section of Congressmen have been attacking the Act and demanding changes in it.

Opposition to the Act comes chiefly from a section of the rural population—land-owners. The provisions of the Act which are attacked most are the ones which entitle daughters to inherit the agricultural land of their fathers in equal portions along with their brothers in all cases in which the father dies intestate. The main object of those who oppose the Hindu Succession Act and demand amendments to it is to deprive the daughters of any right to inherit agricultural land of their fathers. This is an openly declared objective.

One argument advanced in support of this objective is that the right to inherit father's property (especially agricultural land) given to daughters along with sons has spoiled the hitherto extremely good relations between brothers and sisters, that this has imported material considerations into a relationship which before the Act was based upon pure, unselfish affection, that it has deprived sisters of such

brotherly affection, etc. The argument has obviously no weight. It is easily and fully answered by pointing out that if brothers are to love their sisters only if the latter do not get a share in the property, such love is neither genuine nor pure but is in fact tainted by injustice to sisters. When a brother resents his sister having a share in the property, obviously his love for his sister is not very real. Pure and genuine love will be that which a sister gets from a brother who does not deny her equal share in the father's property. Supporters of pure and unselfish brotherly love, therefore, should not oppose but support the right given to daughters.

Another shallow arrangement is that the Act does injustice to sons. It is argued that daughters get dowries in any case when they are married. If they have a share in the property also, the daughters will in fact get more than equal share and the sons will get less. It is now well recognized that the system of dowry is a curse. Speaking generally, dowry does not represent a share in father's property given to the daughter on the occasion of marriage but is the price paid to the bridegroom and his parents for accepting her in marriage. It is at once a symbol of woman's inequality in present-day Indian society and the cause of ruin of many families. The sooner it goes the better. The need for its abolition was fully recognized when Parliament enacted a law against it—only, this law has remained on paper.

Instead of using the Prevalence of the dowry system as an argument for denying daughters the right to inherit property, let this right be made a real one and let that be used as an argument for not giving dowry. It should be clear that if and when the right of daughters to inherit property becomes a widely practised right, it will considerably weaken the dowry system. And that is something all must welcome.

The argument advanced most seriously relates to agricultural land. It is argued that if land is divided not among the sons but among sons as well as daughters, it will result in greater fragmentation, and that will harm agricultural production. It is further argued that normally daughters do not get married in the same village; they are given in marriage in far-off villages; when a married daughter gets a share in her father's land on the latter's death, she and her husband can neither till it themselves nor can supervise the tilling; and this will also harm agricultural production.

As against this, it can be argued that if fragmentation of land is to be prevented and if that is to be the paramount consideration, then the right to inherit property (at least agricultural land) should not be given even to all the sons but only to the eldest. Yet no one demands this—even if it is made, such a move is unlikely to get any support.

As regards the custom of marriage of daughters in far-off villages, it is not sacrosanct. The practice of girl marrying in the

same or nearby villages is likely to grow as women acquire equality in actual life and as young men and women begin to choose their life-partners themselves instead of accepting arranged marriages. It has to be admitted however that such changes in India's rural society will take a long time. A daughter cannot carry her share of land to the village in which she lives with her husband and may not find it easy to make the best use of it from a far-off village. But that will be true of many sons also who may not stick to their villages.

Besides, Parliament foresaw these difficulties, and there are provisions in the Act to check any possible negative results including the danger of greater fragmentation.

There are provisions which restrict the sisters' right to sell their shares and which give the brothers the right of pre-emption if and when any daughter who has inherited land wishes to dispose of it. This should meet any valid objection that may be there. Even apart from this, one has to weigh possible negative effects against the prime need to ensure real economic equality between man and woman. No country can progress if half of its population—women—is given an unequal and unfair status in society. Woman will be the equal of man not only on paper but in fact when she is fully capable of earning her own living, enter any profession she likes for this purpose and get equal pay for equal work, when she is able to contribute to the production of economic goods and wealth, and when she is not penalized for discharging the noble function of motherhood. Equal right to property can help women in acquiring an equal status at least to some extent and therefore is necessary.

It goes to the credit of the democratic consciousness of our people that even the most vociferous opponents of the Hindu Succession Act concede the need for equality between the sexes and are not able to argue on the plane of women being inferior to men. Often the argument is put forward: "We agree that

women should have a right to property. Let them have this right in the property of their fathers-in-law instead of in the property of their fathers."

At first sight, the proposition seems attractive. It appears to have the advantage of giving property (agricultural land) to women in the places where they are actually residing with their husbands. A little deeper thought, however, shows that the proposition is neither helpful nor practical.

First, the right to inherit the father-in-law's property, instead of dealing a blow to the dowry system, is likely to strengthen and accentuate it. The demand for dowry is likely to go up to compensate for what the would-be daughter-in-law may get in inheritance. And this, instead of improving the position of women, will only worsen it.

Secondly, the proposition bristles with difficulties. Suppose on his death the father-in-law leaves two married sons and two unmarried sons—in other words two daughters-in-law and four sons. Is his property to be divided into six shares or eight? If it is to be divided into six, what happens to the wives of the unmarried sons when they marry? If eight, who is to hold in trust the shares of the future daughters-in-law? If the unmarried sons are to do so for their future wives, what happens if they fritter away these shares before they marry? And what is to prevent them from marrying only those girls whose fathers are prepared to give as dowry amounts or goods equivalent to the property which their daughters would get on being married? The difficulties of the proposition must be obvious.

Some State Governments seriously thought of recommending this proposition to the Union Government. Legal experts were consulted and they were reported to have felt that from the viewpoint of constitutional validity the proposition was not feasible.

Another idea sometimes put forward is that women should have the right to inherit the pro-

perty not of their fathers but of their husbands. What about women who do not survive their husbands? Obviously they are outside the purview of this proposition. As regards women who may survive their husbands, are they to inherit the entire property of their husbands (with sons getting nothing as long as their mothers are alive), or are they to get one share equal to what every son gets? And are the widows to get absolute ownership or only the right of use without right to sell, etc? In any case, this proposition at best can be of some help to widows when the husbands pass away but does not help women to attain equality with the other sex to any extent. Some such provisions in fact is already there. In no case can this be a substitute for the right to inherit the father's property.

Having discussed the various arguments advanced by those who oppose or wish to amend the Hindu Succession Act to the detriment of daughters' right to property, it is necessary to emphasise the need for a survey to study its actual working. The Act gives the right to anyone who wishes to deprive his daughters of any share in the property to do so by a will to that effect. Recently the *Tribune* came out with an editorial advising opponents of the daughter's right to property not to insist on any amendment to the Act but to take steps to popularize the provisions of the Act so that landowners can make use of it and make wills before they die. It will be useful to find out to what extent this is already being done.

In Punjab there has also been the practice of brothers getting their sisters to surrender their shares in their (brothers') favour. It should be found out how widespread has been this practice and the reasons why many sisters agree to surrender their shares, and whether they really do so voluntarily.

The Act was passed many years ago and it would be useful to study its effect in actual life to finally dispose of the controversy that crops up again and again.

After Srinagar

AMAR NATH VIDYALANKAR

IT was indeed a stroke of statesmanship on the part of the Prime Minister to have hit upon the idea of convening the National Integration Council in June at Srinagar; and the meeting was well-timed. The deliberations were successful beyond expectation, and had a big impact on the country.

But follow-up action has been poor, as usual, and we have failed to extract the best advantage out of the psychological climate so earnestly built up.

Immediately after the Council meeting, the publicity machinery should have entered the field, in order to sustain and accelerate the impact on the public mind. We should have approached our task in a planned manner. The entire proceedings of the Council along with extracts from different party leaders' and other participants' speeches and statements ought to have been given the widest publicity in all languages. Every department that has anything to do with implementation should have shown vigour and life. This would have convinced the people of our earnestness and would have deepened the effect.

But the situation is that, after more than a month, even the reports of the Council's proceedings are nowhere available except in the columns of months-old newspapers. The bodies which ought to plan, coordinate, and

give suitable directions for energetic follow-up action, have not felt sufficiently concerned, and, everything seems to have been left to the mercy of the sluggish administrative machinery, led by uninspired, unimaginative bureaucrats who have seldom displayed any sense of urgency in such matters.

On the other side, the forces of communalism, like the Jana Sangh and the RSS, are subtly and systematically attempting to wipe out the effect by pouring ridicule on the conclusions of the national convention. The "Organizer", spokesman of the Jana Sangh and RSS, in its recent issues has intentionally devoted much space to propounding its philosophy that "national solidarity", really speaking, could have only one meaning, that is the "solidarity of the Hindu Nation". The RSS organised a rally, and approved a thesis on these very lines. This thesis has been widely circulated.

The Council at Srinagar decided to take several promotional as well as preventive measures. The preventive measures were to be taken by the administrative machinery. I do not know that any State Government, or even the Central Government, has sent round detailed instructions to local officials, who will have to do a lot to prevent the occurrence of communal incidents. The most important thing is that

all the local officials should know that they have to remain extremely vigilant and will be taken severely to task if there is any recrudescence of communal trouble within their jurisdiction. As an effective preventive measure this is extremely important.

So far no steps seem to have been taken to constitute special intelligence units at the State and Central levels or to constitute citizens' committees as consultative bodies at various levels.

Another essential measure would be the screening of such Government officials as frequently come in contact with people, and who have so far been the most active agents and promoters of the communal ideology. Teachers of private denominational schools, up to the High School level, have been worst offenders in this respect. Teachers in government schools are not very different.

For taking these purely administrative measures, we need not wait till the law is amended. Even for the energetic and effective enforcement of the new laws, we have to trim and tone up the administrative machinery.

The great and urgent task of promoting national unity and solidarity cannot be wholly entrusted to the administration alone although the Government and its officials ought to play a very prominent role. It was thought necessary to mobilise the energies of all citizens in different fields of national life. This is possible

only if a suitable climate is created, and the people's emotions are directed into appropriate channels.

The Jana Sangh and RSS leaders have called the Srinagar deliberations "a big tamasha". To counter this onslaught of communalism, we must mobilise the forces of unity and seek to eliminate all divisive elements. Lately, communalism in India has been adopting an aggressive posture. We must boldly resolve to accept this challenge.

Even some staunch nationalists among us have an extremely hazy concept of true nationalism. Often we are deceived by apparently harmless slogans and do not comprehend all the implications. Hindu chauvinistic elements have always advocated a unitary form of government because they think that under a unitary form of government the 'Hindu Majority' would be in an advantageous position to dominate. For the minorities the implications are appalling. Similarly, these elements have begun to advocate the formation of large multilingual States, doing away with the principle of linguistic States. Some seem to imagine that these suggestions are in

conformity with a nationalistic outlook as they advocate elimination of factors tending to lead to the country's fragmentation.

But this argument is fallacious. In order to achieve true national unity and integration, we must clearly understand the true nature and pattern of our unity. India's is unity in diversity. We have to preserve and protect legitimate diversities springing from differences in religion, language, culture etc. This means that India's unity is of a federal character. If the structure of Indian society is based on the federal principle, naturally its political structure will have to grow in conformity with the same principle. In no case should *unity* be confused with *uniformity*. The more we cultivate the attitude of accepting and appreciating the right of diverse sections to live and co-exist, the nearer we will be to national solidarity. Most of us thus need to readjust our attitudes and thoughts.

Past history will naturally play a big role in cultivating emotions. History as presented now excites the emotions of conflict. The writers of Indian history have been the chief culprits in this

matter. They have grievously destroyed India's image. Unfortunately, this very important aspect of national integration, that is, teaching of integrated history, totally escaped the attention of the Srinagar convention. History text-books at present are playing havoc with the emotions of impressionable young minds and tend to bring them up as *Hindus* or *Muslims* or *Sikhs* and so on. True national history is yet to be written.

In Government circles the erroneous notion prevails that in educational matters only the State Governments can take the initiative because education is a State subject. The lead should really come from the centre,

I suggest we organise an execution unit at the Central level that can look closely into the whole programme of implementation. It should keep close watch on the situation and take timely steps with the help of the State and Central Governments and various public organisations. But this body should not be controlled by the bureaucracy. Initiative should largely remain in the hands of its non-official members who should be persons entirely devoted to the cause.

LETTER FROM PARIS

The Carrot and the Club

SCHOFIELD CORYELL

A spectre is haunting France—the spectre of the May revolt and the upsurge of worker-student resistance that paralyzed the economy and shook the society to its foundations.

To prevent "another May," deGaulle is tightening his perso-

nal grip on the state machinery. The centres of revolutionary thought and action are subjected to police attack, and the youth are tracked down in the streets. The imaginative slogans that covered the walls of Paris in May and June are being "co-opted"

and grotesquely caricatured by the regime in an effort to take the wind out of the sails of the embryonic movement of "extra-parliamentary opposition."

The replacement of Pompidou by Couve de Murville as Prime Minister has one purpose; to

reinforce the threatened power of the Monarch who, after the frightening menace of May, has no desire to share the reins of government with collaborators who may prove to be anything more than his faithful servants. There are, of course, no significant, political or ideological differences between Pompidou, a former director of the Rothschild bank, and his successor, the suave smiling aristocrat, Couve de Murville, who is closely linked to the big Protestant banking interests.

Pompidou's Role

Pompidou, in the course of the recent period—and particularly during the May-June crisis—was assuming an increasingly larger share of the decision-making powers, especially concerning internal problems. The behind-the-scene tension between the President and the Prime Minister was becoming intolerable, for there is no room in the Gaullist scheme for the type of dual rulership that seemed to have been taking shape. Rumour has it that toward the end of May, Pompidou actually went so far as to suggest that deGaulle step down—a fatal mistake, as it turned out, for Pompidou. In the election campaign that temporarily saved the regime from collapse, it was Pompidou who appeared repeatedly before the public through his television broadcasts, cleverly combining prudence with red-baiting—with the desired effect.

In addition to the increasing tension between Pompidou and deGaulle himself, various Gaullist figures reproached Pompidou for "laxness" and "softness" in dealing with the May revolt. These elements criticized Pompidou specifically for withdrawing the police from the Sorbonne, leaving it and other public buildings free for student occupation, and for not giving the police the order to shoot the demonstrating students, rather than "simply" repressing them with grenades and truncheons. These accusations from the "tough" Gaullists were reinforced by those of the "Gaullist Left", like Rene Capitant, now Minister of

Justice, who criticised Pompidou for his openly anti-labour economic and social policies, and his inability to appease the working-class by apparent concessions.

It is unlikely, however, that the new Prime Minister will prove to be much of an innovator in the field of economic and social policy, or that he will resort to measures that would reduce, in any way, the profits of the major industrial interests. The economic daily, *Les Echos* describes Couve de Murville as an "efficient manager of public affairs and the economy in the most orthodox tradition." In choosing him, deGaulle intended primarily to make of the new cabinet a simple organ for the execution of his will—and behind that will lurk the essential economic powers of France.

D'Estaing's Exclusion

While the new cabinet includes such "Leftwing Gaullists" as Rene Capitant (Minister of Justice) and Edgar Faure (in the unenviable position of Minister of Education), alongside such "hard-liners" as Raymond Marcellin (Minister of the Interior) and Roger Frey (Minister for Relations with Parliament), it finds no place for the so-called "conditional Gaullists" of the "Yes-but!" school, represented by the Independent Republican Party of Giscard d'Estaing. D'Estaing's exclusion from his former post as head of the Parliament's Finance Committee further accentuates the tendency of the regime to concentrate all power in the President himself. As a result of the Gaullist landslide in the elections, the dominant Party has no further need to include in its embrace the Independent Republicans, a conservative group which has often criticized Gaullist financial policies as "extravagant" and opposed the highly personalized character of the regime.

The National Office of the Independent Republican Party, in a communique issued shortly before the exclusion of d'Estaing from the leadership of the Finance Committee, pointed out that: "The essential aspect of the

question is political. In the aftermath of events which have led the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister and the electorate to express their desire for greater openness, dialogue and participation, the maintenance of Giscard d'Estaing at his post is particularly desirable."

The President's newly-proclaimed aim of providing for wider participation is in fact bluntly contradicted at the very outset by the increasingly rigid and authoritarian character of a regime that was already eminently rigid and authoritarian.

This view was succinctly expressed, for example, by Georges Valence in the liberal anti-Gaullist daily, *Combat*, July 16: "We can well ask ourselves by what miracle a head of state who does not practise wide participation either with his Ministers, nor his deputies, nor his electors will make it blossom forth with the support of a conservative majority." The fact is that the regime is becoming increasingly exclusive, even within the rightist family itself.

Slogan of Participation

Yet the May explosion, it is true, so frightened the rulers of France that the essential demand raised in one way or another by the students occupying their Universities and the workers their factories—the demand for the right to make the decisions that affect their lives—could not be ignored in high places. In an effort to appease this demand for "self-determination", the regime has invented the slogan of "participation" in the hope of creating, if possible, the illusion that real freedom can exist in the framework of capitalism. The purpose obviously is to weaken the fight for a genuinely democratic form of socialism. Thus deGaulle on June 7 declared: "If a revolution means a profound change in what exists, especially with reference to the conditions and dignity of the workers, then participation is certainly a revolution."

In statements since then, deGaulle has spoken of the need to adapt the technological contemporary society, with its inhuman,

impersonal mechanistic aspects, to the aspirations of men and women, and some commentators—for example, Claude Krief, political writer for *Nouvel-Observateur*, a lively leftwing weekly—credit the General with the grandiose aim of operating a sort of deep change in the forms of company management amounting to an “internal de-colonization”, analogous to the external de-colonization in the French Empire. Such changes, of course, would be intended to strengthen the basic structures of capitalism, while making them more palatable to the masses of exploited, manipulated and alienated people who revolted in May.

Essential Steps to be Taken

The new Prime Minister, in his statement on July 17 before the General Assembly, gave few concrete details about the “participation” scheme the regime has in mind. “An essential step to be taken,” he said, “is to organize the necessary dialogue inside the enterprise between the management and the workers.” He goes on to state that the workers should be informed of the plans and progress of the enterprise, and that they should share in the “prosperity”.

The Prime Minister had nothing more concrete than that to offer at the time, and his prudence on the subject prompted some journalists to comment that he probably has no personal enthusiasm for the idea. A bill on the question of “participation” is, however, expected to be presented to Parliament before the end of the year. One point should be emphasized: While various forms of *profit-sharing* have been proposed in the past—for example, one of last years ordinances, which has remained largely a dead letter calls for it—this is the first time that the question of workers’ participation in the *decision-making process* has ever been raised, even though in an ineffectual and demagogic way, since all that is mentioned so far is the right to “information.”

The industrialists’ organizations have expressed considerable

misgivings about the much-talked of plans to “revolutionize” company management methods and techniques. In France, the “human relations” approach has not yet been widely applied in industry, and the problem of psychologically “integrating” the workers into the management set-up has not been dealt with as extensively as for example, in the United States. The newly-elected President of the French Employers’ Association (CNPF), Mr Huvelin, stated this month: “Any reforms in company management should be based on the re-inforcement of the existing structures and hierarchy, which should be helped to assume all their responsibilities.” The Chamber of Commerce issued the following statement: “The necessity for a dialogue between management and labour should not imply any basic questioning of the principles of responsibility and unity in the decision-making process.”

In fact, the industry spokesmen need have no immediate fear on this score, since Couve de Murville, in the above-mentioned speech before the National Assembly, hastened to add that “No-one can deny that an enterprise must be *directed*, and that this direction is the province of those who assume the responsibility. By the same token, profit is justified wherever there exist risk and competition.”

The largest and most influential French union organization, the Communist-led C.G.T., has traditionally opposed all forms of “profit-sharing” and all attempts to “integrate” the worker in to the capitalist company for which the works. Thus, Andre Barjonet—formerly Secretary of the CGT’s Economic and Social Commission, who quit his post in protest against the union’s reformist attitude during the May events—pointed out in a critical article about the CGT in the month’s *Temps Modernes* that the CGT, whatever its faults, does cling faithfully to the Marxist concept of surplus value produced by the workers for the benefit of the capitalist. For this doctrinal reason—which

corresponds to the actual state of mind of most French workers—the CGT leaders refuse to endorse any schemes for the partnership of capital and labour, which they view as so many efforts to conceal the exploitative character of capitalist production. The CGT’s opposition to the “participation” scheme is certain, and has already been officially stated. Faced with the misgivings, however unnecessary, of the employers, and the hostility of labour, the participation project will probably have rough sailing. The trade unionists are concerned, however, about another question, scheduled to be taken up soon in Parliament—the issue of legislation guaranteeing trade-union rights inside the plants. This was one of the demands raised during the May strike movement.

Spectacle of Brutality

While the regime uses the carrot of “participation”—which at best may interest the cadres and higher-level employees—it simultaneously intensifies the repression against all signs of militant public action against the Gaullist regime or in favour of socialism. The tough new Minister of the Interior, Raymond Marcellin, has notified his subordinates that the police forces must be prepared to intervene fiercely and effectively to quell the slightest sparkle of open defiance. The police and CRS troops are on the alert, and every Saturday and Sunday evening they are out in force along the Boulevard Saint Michel and the streets of the Latin Quarter, where their very presence creates a sense of insecurity and inevitably leads to violence. Thus, on July 13 and 14—National Bastille Day—youths, provoked by the arrogance and bullying attitude of the riot police, briefly spontaneously demonstrated both in the Latin Quarter and (appropriately) near the Bastille monument, a working-class quarter. In both places they were brutally put down with clubs and gas.

Leaders of the various revolutionary groups—Trotskyist, Maoist, Anarchist—have been

arrested in line with a June ruling ordering them dissolved. Last week Alain Krivine, leader of the Revolutionary Communist Youth, a very active group, was arrested and imprisoned. The police immediately suppressed an attempted demonstration on July 16 protesting the recent

wave of political arrests. The attacks were swift and fierce, and were aimed at anyone who had a youthful appearance or appeared concerned by the spectacle of brutality before his or her eyes. The demonstration was sponsored by a group of well-known artists and writers, including Sartre,

Marguerite Duras, Claude Roy. The latter was among the many arrested. Meanwhile the police forces are being reinforced numerically and prepared psychologically for the end of the vacation period when thousands of workers and students will resume the struggle.

A Critique of New Education Policy

C. R. RATHEE

DR Triguna Sen, our Education Minister had to threaten to quit his Cabinet Post to get the resolution of national policy on education cleared by the Union Cabinet. When the Deputy Prime Minister Sri Morarji Desai and some other Central leaders tried to stand in the way, the whole educational world expressed their indignation against the opponents of the new national policy without caring to know what is new in the new policy and of what worth is the new policy.

That even after two years of the Kothari Commission's report and after numerous conferences at ministerial and expert levels, the Union Cabinet could approve only a vaguely worded resolution—I should say, irresolution—only indicates that there never has been, and perhaps there never will be, any sense of urgency in our educational endeavours.

Before attempting a critique, let me reproduce the broad features of the new education policy:

(1) Strenuous efforts would be made to fulfil the obligation of free and compulsory education up to the age of 14 as laid down in Article 45 of the Constitution.

*The author is Principal,
Haryana Heroes' Memorial
College, Rohtak.*

(2) The status and emoluments of teachers should be adequately and satisfactorily determined according to their qualifications and responsibilities,

(3) Academic freedom of the teacher to pursue and publish research and speak and write about national and international studies should be protected.

(4) To keep pace with world knowledge, special emphasis needs to be placed on the study of English and other international languages.

(5) Equalisation of educational opportunity is important in educational development of the country and, in pursuit of this aim, it is necessary to correct regional imbalances and provide educational facilities in rural and other backward areas.

(6) To promote social cohesion and national integration, common schools system should be provided.

(7) Efforts should be made to improve the standard of education in general schools, and in special schools students should be admitted on merit and certain proportion of free students should be catered to prevent segregation.

(8) Special effort should be made to expand girls' education.

(9) For the cultivation of excellence, it is necessary that talent should be identified at an early stage and opportunity given

for its full development.

(10) Work experience in national service, including participation in meaningful community service and national reconstruction, should become an integral part of the education system.

(11) Development of education for agriculture and industry should be emphasized and there should be continuous review of industrial and technical needs of the country to maintain proper balance between the output of educational institutions and employment opportunities.

(12) The quality of text-books should be improved by attracting best writing talent through liberal policy of incentives and remuneration. Prices of books should be low. Special attention should be given to improvement of children's books and books in regional languages at the university level.

(13) It will be advantageous to have a broadly uniform structure in all parts of the country. The ultimate objective should be to 10-2-3-years educational pattern as recommended by the Education Commission.

(14) Educational reconstruction on these lines will need additional financial outlay and it should be the aim to gradually increase investment on education so as to reach the level of six percent of the national income as early as possible. (*The Educa-*

tion Commission aimed this in a period of 20 years).

(15) Considering the key role science and research play in the development of material and human resources, the Government will in addition to undertaking programme in Central sector, assist State Governments in developing programmes of national importance where coordinated action on the part of the Centre and the State is called for.

The Policy Resolution envisages five-yearly review of the progress made in its implementation.

Vital Issues Avoided

Even a cursory glance over the outlines of the new national policy would bear me out that the authors have carefully avoided incorporating vital issues such as teachers' participation in elections, neighbourhood schools and creation of an Indian Education Service. On the controversial issue of languages, the new policy blandly sets forth the three-language formula (which is now a *Mantra*, we intone without much conviction) with the ultimate objective of imparting university-level education through the medium of Indian languages. But the Cabinet resolution sets neither the dead-line for this nor the machinery to make the State implement the "Sen policy" (as the new national policy on education is likely to be named in days to come). It is not for the first time that the Central Government has reaffirmed its faith in the three-language formula.

The difficulty as before is that the States are in no mood to implement it. Madras has only recently abolished Hindi classes in secondary schools. It is most unlikely that it will now agree to introduce Hindi as a compulsory subject. Even among the Hindi-speaking States, few will be willing to compel secondary school students to learn one of the Southern languages. It is not enough for the Central Government merely to state what ought to be done. It must face up to the practical difficulties and point out how they can best be over-

come. There is no point in going on hoping against hope that all the States will somehow veer round to its point of view and accept the formula with good cheer, just because Dr Triguna Sen is the pioneer of the new formula.

And it is not very reasonable also to expect every Indian school child to know three languages. Let the Universities indicate the level and variety of language proficiencies needed for different courses of study.

It does not seem to have occurred to the draftsmen in the Central Secretariat that there is a simple way in which the Union Government could show its own earnestness to implement the new policy. This could be done by clearly laying down the linguistic proficiencies needed for various cadres of the Central services. It is not too much to expect Dr Sen and his colleagues to lay down that candidates for positions in the top-levels of all-India services should know an Indian language besides their mother-tongue and a world language. At a lower level, bilingualism could be insisted on and no job above that of a Class-IV servant available to persons who are literate only in the mother tongue. That a simple decision like this is not taken by the Central Government makes one suspect that they do not mean business when they talk of the three-language formula.

Deceptive Statement

To keep pace with the world knowledge, special emphasis has been resolved to be laid on the study of English. But has the Government any idea of what this will entail? Not even one out of ten teachers of English today knows the language well. How does the Government hope to secure the services of better teachers? Has it worked out the costs of new training facilities and higher pay scales? A statement of general principles does not help. If the educational system is in such poor shape today it is because no attempt has been made to translate principles into a programme of action. The bland statement that teachers'

salaries should be "adequate and satisfactory" will deceive no one. With two-and-a-half million teachers in schools even an increase of ten rupees in their monthly salary will add Rs 30 crores to the annual education budget. The States are in no position to foot a bill of this order. It is no more than a pious wish to talk of giving "an honourable place" in society to teachers. The plain truth is that as things are, teaching is destined to remain the poorest paid profession for a long time to come.

Not a word has been said to put an end to the disparities in the emoluments of the teachers working in Universities and those working in mofussil colleges. As nearly 90 percent of the college teachers in India are those falling in the latter category, unless their lot is bettered, things cannot improve. The Education Commission report has devoted considerable space on the suggestions directed to improve the salary and conditions of work and service of the teachers working in privately-managed institutions.

No Academic Freedom

We have been hearing of "academic freedom" all these years since independence. The new Policy Statement does not specify anything as how to ensure academic freedom. The teachers are supposed to be the most well-informed section of our society and still they have been denied the privilege of participating in politics, in spite of the UGC's recommendation in favour of such freedom. The fact is that the politicians control the university bodies like Syndicates and Senates; the teachers are denied fair share even in these bodies. No useful purpose would be served unless the educationists are made masters of the Universities. Academic freedom can be better assured by making education a "concurrent subject" and creating an all-India Education Service.

Eighteen years ago, the authors of the Constitution of India enshrined a Directive Principle in it that education should be free and compulsory upto the age of

14. The Sen statement opens with a reiteration of this constitutional provision. It can be easily understood how serious our leaders are about laying down the national policy on education of free India. It is a self-inflicted slap on the face of Central leadership that they have not so far implemented the Directive Principles concerning free and compulsory schooling upto middle standard in spite of the uninterrupted tenure of the Congress party at the Centre.

The phrasing of almost the whole policy statement is mouldy in the usual Secretariat tradition. The very concepts of equalization of opportunities, democratisation of education and removal of disparities between the rich and poor so far as the schooling is concerned, have been slaughtered by the draftsmen of the statement as would be evident from a reading of the features 5, 6 and 7 of the new policy referred earlier in this article. Free India's first statement on national

educational policy should have boldly declared: The public school system is straightaway scrapped."

At least one good purpose would be served by the new policy pronouncement. It is a first-class propaganda score of Dr Triguna Sen. Beyond this, like the Directive Principles of State Policy provided in the Indian Constitution, the Education Policy Statement can at the best be a pious wish forming an additional chapter in the textbooks for teacher-trainees.

PROBLEMS OF CHANGE-OVER

Regional Languages as Media of Instruction in the Social Sciences

VISHWANATH PRASAD VARMA

SOcial Sciences constitute a very important sector of our knowledge regarding man and his interpersonal relations. In most of the Oriental civilizations there has not been adequate growth of scientific knowledge and sophisticated tools of analysis for probing into social changes, social forces, social adjustments and social developments.

In the classics and the religious traditions of the older civilizations we have a large number of maxims, precepts and sermons for the incorporation of moral elements in social relations but the application of critical reason to problems of social deve-

lopment and social dynamics is a phenomenon that has been borrowed by the Eastern civilizations from the modern West.

The dynamic teachings of Western social and political philosophers like Locke, Paine, Rousseau, Marx, Lenin, Veblen etc. have come to the East as explosive forces which have disturbed the traditional immobility and static character of the Eastern Civilizations. In the context of change-over to regional languages it is very important that our links which have been established with the pungent, critical and dynamic aspects of Western social and political thought are not lost sight of. The Asian intellectuals have to be on guard to see that in the process of use of regional languages as media of instruction there is no going back to the perpetuation of the decadent and fossilized social conceptions of the traditional law-givers, mandarins, religious litterati, priests, hierophants, Pandits and Maulvis. The change-over to regional

languages should be an additional help for the dissemination of the critical knowledge contained in some of the Western classics, to the mass of the Indian people.

The problems of change-over to the regional languages as media of instruction in the domain of social sciences are considerable. The foremost problem is that there can be no substitute for the growth of independent thinking. Indian intellectuals have to produce books and treatises which will contain original thinking and will provide messages for the Indian people. I realise that the production of original books cannot be made to order. Original books are the creation of the first-rate minds. Our potentialities in the field of creative intellectualism have to be developed and we have to see that we do not lag behind in the race of creation in the field of social and political knowledge.

Apart from the production of original books, an immediate task is to translate the important Western books in the regional

Dr Varma is the University Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science and Director, Institute of Public Administration, Patna University. This contribution was submitted as a working paper at the Seminar on Language question organised by Bihar Council of Education on July 25-28, 1968 at Patna.

languages. The process of linguistic facility has to be cultivated and the language of translations has to be easy so that communication of thought is possible. Verbosity has to be avoided and emphasis has to be on the reproduction of the sense of the texts rather than on the literal translation of all words, concepts, phrases and sentences. If easy, graceful communication can be achieved in the regional languages then through the process of translation a very large amount of literature can be built up in the various languages.

Standardized terms

With regard to the work of translation I suggest that at least in the North Indian languages which are derived from the various Prakrits and ultimately from Sanskrit, standardized terms should be used; for example, the rendering of the terms, state, nation, sovereignty, federalism, value, price, personality, group etc. should be the same in Hindi, Bengali, Oriya, Marathi, Punjabi etc. The standardized equivalents will be a great gain and will ultimately promote inter-communication in the various regional languages.

To facilitate the work of translation, good dictionaries are needed in the various Indian languages. I have three or four dictionaries of terms which contain the rendering of English terms into Hindi but none of them appears satisfactory to me. We have to produce dictionaries of the same standard and the same stamp of maturity and scholarship which we find in Webster's International Dictionary or the bigger Oxford Dictionary.

The production of standardized terms will, further, also involve the preparation of multilingual dictionary which will contain standardized translations of English terms in the various regional languages.

In this connection I may remind people, although I will not press this point at this stage, that it will be useful if the spokesmen of the various North Indian languages can eventually be persuaded to adopt the

Devanagari script for writing in their regional languages. This will be a great step for the evolution of national integration and consciousness. But as times are passing the romantic attachment to one's local script is getting intense support and it appears difficult to canvass the cause of Devanagari script for all the North Indian languages.

Another important problem is with regard to the allotment of marks. In the transitional period when some students will be writing in English and some in their regional languages we have to guard against discrimination in the allotment of marks. During the last three to four years several students have met me and told me that they were apprehensive that if they wrote in Hindi their scripts would be under-marked. I do not know whether there is any foundation in their apprehension but I visualise a situation when there should be no ghost of suspicion in the minds of students.

Problem of Change-over

At the post-graduate level and at the Doctoral level there are bound to be difficulties. At present, some of our M.A. theses and most of our Ph.D. theses have examiners at the national level to examine them. This results in the raising up of standards but if there are only local examiners in the small regions to evaluate M.A. theses and Ph. D. theses then there is great likelihood of deterioration of standards. This is a serious problem. I am for the universalisation of education up to the under-graduate level. But at the advanced M.A. and Ph. D. level I advocate the attainment of the highest international standards of competence.

Another problem of change-over to the regional languages is that of communication. Several of the senior teachers who have been throughout their professional career expressing themselves in English may find it difficult to translate technical and sophisticated concepts in the regional media but I do not consider it a superlative obstacle. By application of will power and by sus-

tained efforts it will be possible to achieve facility in communication. However, in the early stages we will have to tolerate some kind of a mixture when teachers will have the freedom to speak partly in English and partly in Hindi. Sometimes they may express themselves in the regional languages but may give some short notes in English. Alternatively, they may use English terms and concepts and also their Hindi renderings.

A Major Difficulty

A major difficulty will be with regard to the use of numerals. The Constitution-makers contemplated that so far as the numerals are concerned the international forms of these numerals should be adopted. But in most treatises in the Hindi language I have seen that Devanagari numerals are used. In the Hindi books published by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, Arabic numerals are used. Related to the use of numerals will be the use of equations and mathematical formulas. In books of econometrics and statistical branches of the social sciences, one has to use a large number of mathematical symbols and notations. On this problem I have an open mind. Normally, in keeping with the genius of the regional languages I would like that numerical forms prevalent in that language should be used but if difficulties are experienced and if there are chances of printing errors then the statistical and mathematical portion of the social sciences may be written in Arabic characters and may utilize some Roman figures also.

A big problem will be the publication of research journals. When I contemplate the not too bright future even of a journal like *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, which is a major journal of all-India level in the field of political science, I am filled with alarm at the prospect of issuing journals in the various regional languages. If we cannot successfully manage in English one India-level journal, what chances are there that we will be able to manage thirteen or fourteen standard journals in the

various regional languages ? But this is a tremendous challenge to our resources and we will have to apply all our ingenuity to make this branch of linguistic development a success.

In every University a translation bureau has to be set up and this bureau should be concerned with the advancement of literature in the various regional languages in the subjects of

social and legal sciences. Some such bureaux have been set up in several universities but I regret to say that their performance has not been up to the mark. One major reason for this failure has been the non-cooperation from the side of the senior teachers who have failed to provide the leadership in this job. In the absence of leadership, the junior teachers also have deve-

loped the mentality of lukewarmness.

One suggestion that I may put forward is that for bringing out standard translations of important books in English, some kind of monetary incentive should be provided to the teachers and the fact that they have made such contributions should also be taken into consideration while recommending their promotion.

Golden Rose of Konstantin Paustovsky

SAJJAD ZAHEER

SAD news has reached us from Moscow that Konstantin Paustovsky, one of the outstanding Russian writers of the present epoch, died on July 14.

Unfortunately not many of his writings, novels, short stories, essays etc. are available to us yet in English; but a few years ago, the Foreign Languages publishing House of Moscow gave to us a slim volume of literary essays by Paustovsky—*The Golden Rose*. This is a book of twenty essays which could be classified as belonging to the genre of literary criticism. But Paustovsky is unique in that he endows these essays with almost creative quality. Narrating anecdotes and interesting incidents of life and nature like a true artist and creating..... intrinsic aesthetic beauty he, yet, brings out in a striking and novel manner his own conception of literary and artistic creation. Thus the very first essay relates the charming French story of the Golden Rose, and ends with the words:

"Every minute, every chance word and glance, every thought profound or flippant, the imperceptible beat of the human heart, and by the same token, the fluff dropping from the poplar, the starlight gleaming in a pool, all

are grains of gold dust. Over the years, we writers subconsciously collect millions of these tiny grains and keep them stored away until they form a mould out of which we shape our own particular golden rose—a story, novel or poem. From these precious particles a stream of literature is born.....It should play its part in ensuring that beauty, the pursuit of happiness, joy and freedom, generosity and reason dissipate the gloom and shine with the brilliance of the unsetting sun" (p 23).

In another essay Paustovsky emphasises the importance of the appreciation of the arts—poetry, painting, architecture, sculpture and music for writers of creative prose—because such an appreciation "will help to enrich the spiritual outlook of the prose writer and lend greater vigour to his writing. The play of lights and the tints in painting, the refreshing vocabulary of poetry, the harmony of architectural lines, the direct appeal of sculpture, the principles of music are all treasures added to prose, her contemporary colours, as it were" (p 215). He tells us about his visits to one of the greatest treasure houses of the arts in the world, the Hermitage Museum at Leningrad.

Paustovsky says:

"I spent much time there and the longer I looked at the old Greek statues or at Canova's strangely smiling women, the better I understood how strongly these sculptures appealed to our sense of beauty. The sentiments they inspired would lead us, I know, to the real dawn of humanity when poetry shall reign supreme in our hearts and the social order towards which we march through years of labour, trial and ordeal will be founded on the beauty of justice, the beauty of the mind, of the heart, of human relationships and of the human body.

"We are marching towards a golden age. It will come. It is only to be regretted that we of the present generation shall not live to see it, yet we can feel its refreshing breath and this makes us happy" (pp226-27).

Reading Paustovsky I naturally thought about the immense wealth of art and beauty which our country possesses. Without being a narrow nationalist I do really think that no other country in the world, except perhaps China, has created such a rich heritage of breath-taking beauty as the Indian people have through their sculpture, architecture, painting,

music, dance, drama, the wonderful ornaments and dresses of their women, and all their other superb handicrafts, both sophisticated and folk. If we add to this treasure the great wealth of our classical literature—Sanskrit, Pali and Tamil—the literature of medieval period and the best in the literatures of the modern languages of India, one can only have the feeling of *embarras de richesses*. If our cultural wealth is so great, an Indian should, logically, be the most cultured person in the world. And yet, paradoxically, this is not true. Cultural wealth is worthless, like gold and diamond in the bowels of the earth, unless it is utilised by man and becomes part of his sensibility, his spiritual refinement, his total consciousness.

The neglect, the callous indifference towards the arts and the almost total incapacity to appreciate and enjoy even the masterpieces of Indian artistic and literary creations by a great

majority of the so-called educated sections of our people is phenomenal, and in actual fact, places us very low indeed in the ranks of the cultured peoples of the world.

But we know also, that the struggle for a cultured India, for the triumph of the beauty of justice, of mind and heart and body, of which Paustovsky wrote so eloquently, is inextricably bound with the struggle of the Indian people for the overthrow of the rule of soulless Indian moneybags and all their disgusting paraphernalia of philistinism, ignorance blind prejudice, brutality and inhumanity.

Fifty years ago the situation of culture in the culturally and educationally most advanced country of the world today, the USSR, was not very much better. A Russian writer told me that when Tolstoy, the greatest of their writers lived in pre-revolutionary Moscow, only the handful of highly educated

Russians knew and appreciated him. A great majority of even those who lived in the same locality as Tolstoy, could not and did not read his books. But now, in the same country, millions and millions, much more than in his own native land India, read and enjoy Rabindranath Tagore and many other Indian writers. Undoubtedly, socialism does mean the dawn of the Golden Age.

We can claim to be the true inheritors of the great treasure house of Indian culture only when millions of our common people, exploited and disinherited today, become truly the masters of their own destiny. The people's struggle for socialism, therefore, is also the struggle for the preservation, assimilation and development, according to our modern needs and conception of Indian culture—an all-sided growth and development of man according to our noblest and the most beautiful humanist traditions.

TANGENT

Private Talks

MR Cats-and-bags, Atal Behari Vajpayeeji and Charvaka carry on the fruitful discussions held earlier at the more formal governmental level.

Charvaka: Sir, Mr Catsandbags, I hear that you're an Under Secretary with the American Government. Here an Under Secretary's scales are.....

Atal: Don't be silly. There's no question of striking comparisons....

Catsandbags: Oh, well, in the States...

Charvaka: Sir, Mr Catsandbags, it all right by us. You're just an Under Sec., but here

you're talking to guys even higher up than Dep. Secs. and all, guys on eighteen hundred-twentyfive hundred scale and all...

Atal: Oh, sir, we really don't hold that against you. We believe that an American Under Sec. or even a Section Officer, is fit company for a full fledged Indian Joint Sec., believe us, and we say this to convince you of how strongly the Indian people feel kinship for your great country in spite of whatever the Indian Government says and does.

Cats: I was just trying to explain what an Under Secretary

meant in our setup...

Charvaka: Please sir, it's okay by us. You really oughtn't to bother to explain. There is already perfect understanding between our two peoples who are partners in the great adventure of freedom.

Atal: Go ahead, sir, Mr Catsandbags. Let's carry on the discussion on the Russian supply of arms to the Pakistanis.

Cats: Yeah, that's right. You see the Russians are militarising Pakistan.

Atal: There shouldn't be any dialogue with either Pakistan or China.

Charvaka : In fact, sir, Mr Catsandbags, we feel that there shouldn't be any dialogue with anybody. Everybody's trying to commit aggression against us. Except the United States, that is, India being the largest democracy (though the Election Commission is currently seized with the problem of rising campaign costs for the candidates), and more so since we've had three smooth changes of government...

Cats : Yeah, that's right. The world is looking to India, especially after all this, whatever it is.

Atal : Sir, Mr Catsandbags, but what do you have to say about Pakistan ?

Cats : Well, we did give them a lot of arms...

Charvaka : Oh, sir, you really oughtn't to say that. If you ask me, you didn't give the Pakistanis any arms worth mentioning.

Atal : How silly can people get, really. Next they might be accusing you of having supplied arms to China.

Cats : In fact, that's what I was about to say. The Chinese must be buying a lot of American guns from the world markets.

Charvaka : Depressing thought indeed. But why do the Chinese need to buy anyone else's guns. They are so aggressive themselves.

Cats : I protest. You have no right to discredit the weapons we make. They are about the

best in the world, and if the Chinese want to buy some of ours, of course, via the European markets, the Chinese are admitting their communism has failed.

Charvaka : But, sir, Mr Catsandbags, you really oughtn't to feel you've armed Pakistan.

Cats : But we did arm Pakistan. We gave them a lot of Patton tanks and stuff, and....

Atal : We blew the whole lot of it up in no time, with ancient Bharatiya weapons like the Gnats....

Cats : I protest against the insinuation that the Pattons are inferior. This is a thing on which we Americans can get terribly angry...

Atal : Sir, we apologise.

Charvaka : Sir, Mr Catsandbags, how could we say such a thing about smuggled goods?

Cats : Smuggled goods? What the hell you mean?

Charvaka : I mean, good *forrun* things like watches, transistors, suits, Patton tanks and so on. All *forrun* stuff we get smuggled, if you know what we mean.

Cats : I don't care to know. But the Pattons weren't smuggled.

Atal : A slight misunderstanding, sir. Semantics, that's all. But let me assure you on behalf of the people, there's no ill-will here towards your country

on that score.

Cats : Actually, we had given them those guns and stuff to be used against the Chinese and the Russians.

Charvaka : That's right, sir. It was the fault of the Russians and the Chinese that they didn't give a chance to Pakistan to use them.

Atal : It was part of the international communist conspiracy. But let us not talk of Pakistan, as that would only make this adventure of freedom embarrassing.

Cats : Let us not talk of Pakistan. But now you know what great goodwill we had for you when we gave them the Pattons.

Charvaka : Of that we have no doubt, sir, Mr Catsandbags. It was just because the Russians and the Chinese wouldn't let the Pattons be used against Russian and Chinese armies that the good, friendly Pattons from the Free World had to be let loose against somebody, or else they would have rusted and gone bad, and the only guys within range were us...

Cats : That's right. So here's to Indo-American friendship!

Charvaka : Gulp. Down with the international Communist Conspiracy!

Atal : Shubhamastu.

—*Charvaka*

Communications

LANGUAGE AND NATIONALITIES

MAINSTREAM has done a good job by publishing P. Cheerath's article entitled "Language and Nationalities" in its issue of July 13. The most lamentable feature of contemporary Indian history is the way our

anti-imperialist nationalism gets diluted in the hands of the very political force that should have been its main pillar, the Communists. This article by Cheerath offers them much food for thought.

It does not require much investigation to see the harm the Communist's diluted nationalism has done to the country. The nationalism that put India in the forefront of the world's anti-imperialist struggle is today,

at the beginning of the third decade of her freedom, chary in fighting reaction and revivalism within her own boundaries, and this in spite of its having at its flank a working class and a peasantry with a creditable political record.

The cause of this sad phenomenon is not that our nationalism has become a spent force. If it were so, we would not have still remained a non-aligned country wedded to secular and socialist democracy under a parliamentary system that concedes not only adult franchise but also such civil liberties and federal flexibilities as are not so common everywhere. Nor would we have solved the problem of, say, Goa the way we did or forged so many links with the socialist world, the shock of the Sino-Indian imbroglio notwithstanding.

What has put our-imperialist nationalism in a state of disarray is a crisis of leadership, the reason for which is not far to seek. With its hold on the state power steeply on the ascendant, capitalism, which used to be the backbone of our nationalism, has lost much of its old will and vision, upsetting the balance of forces we call the Indian National Congress. In other words, nationalism has outgrown its leadership and is in dire need of a new one.

The vacuum should have been filled by the working class and its allies. If instead of that, reaction, revivalism, and all sorts of fissiparous forces are gaining ground, it is just because the Communists, by having confused the working class and its allies about their place and role in our anti-imperialist nationalism, have plugged the source from where the new leadership was to spring.

How could the working class and its allies have acquired an imaginative national outlook when they for instance find their main guide and philosopher, the Communists, get regionally divided into acrimonious camps whenever there is an interstate dispute over a few cusecs of river water or a few inches of land?

Ever since their advent into

the national scene, the Communists have been consistently putting such strain on the understanding of the working class and its allies. Those acquainted with our recent history will remember what happened during the Civil Disobedience movement, the Quit India uprising, and the resistance to partition, the three most crucial trials our nationalism had before independence.

The story since independence is worse. At a time when nationalism was groping towards new progressive postures in spite of the crisis of leadership being already there, the Communists raised to the top priority the task of linguistic re-distribution of the states. Not that the demand was not of high priority. But could it have outvied those of readjusting international postures under conditions of acute cold war and of regrouping the internal forces to meet the new economic challenge?

It should be borne in mind here that the demand for linguistic redistribution of states had been pressed hard without any effective or even exemplary resistance to local chauvinism which the movement unleashed. On the contrary, the Communists by themselves put a premium on local chauvinism in the name of democratic unity. They could follow such policies before and after independence because of their diluted sense of nationalism.

The harm this diluted nationalism has done came into sharp relief after the Fourth General Election gave a revolutionary turn to our parliamentary democracy. A fact of our modern history that does not seem to have attracted any attention is the parallelism between 1885 when the various political forces of the country converged to give birth to the Indian National Congress, and 1967 when a similar process worked to create a new national balance of forces in our body politic.

As history never repeats itself in toto, there, however, was a significant difference between the two parallels. In 1885, our incipient capitalism, because of its very incipience, was too

buoyant to have to reckon with any rival to its hegemony. But in 1967, the working class and its allies, who alone are the main source of a new leadership to our anti-imperialist nationalism, had in capitalism a crafty customer.

This was by itself a difficult situation to face. Is it difficult to imagine how much the pitch had been queered further for the nation by the fact of its having the source of a new leadership plugged?

The dismal failure of the various United Front Ministries has been explained in a number of ways. But the explanation that dodges attention is just the one that is most valid. It is the total failure of the working class and its allies to readjust their attitudes and postures in the light of the almost qualitative change brought about by the results of the Fourth General Election.

Nineteen sixty-seven was not 1956. The stranglehold of the moribund Congress was not breached in a single state, making it essentially a Communist achievement. In terms of population, the majority of the people handled the lever that had pushed Congress out of power, which went to make the tasks of these non-Congress Ministries national in form and ameliorative in content. The working class and its allies lost sight of just this fact.

What stemmed from it is well known. Sectarian extremism broke up the new balance of forces when it was still in the formative stage. Much noise has been made in sectarian circles about the so-called neutralization of the police. What is conveniently kept out of our ken is the point as to why instead of being neutralized, the police was not ruthlessly used to attack the evils of corruption, inefficiency, and black marketeering? Which was what the broad masses expected of them. Was the neutralization really as important as it is made out to be? Did the working class and its allies really need this flamboyant gesture from the emerging balance of forces? If they could have fought heroic battles during both imperialist

repression and Congress misrule, was it not enough for them that a rising balance of forces with the Communists in it was in half the state secretariats, and most of them major ones? The fact is that this neutralization of the police was an act of kowtowism. The Communists, especially the Left wing of them, had to resort to it because of the heritage their diluted nationalism has created for them.

An example will make the point clear. During the Second World War, the workers of this country exercised extreme caution even in pursuing their legitimate trade-unionism. The reason was that they did not want those fighting the fascist menace to be hampered in any way. But when millions of their own countrymen, literally driven to the wall by twenty years of Congress misrule, turned to them in search of relief, they sought to exploit the situation for the sectarian gains.

What is at the root of this contrast? Want of faith in the nationalist elements. The majority of those whose votes threw the Congress out in a number of States were not converts to the cause of a government under proletarian hegemony; they were nationalists in search of a new leadership capable of carrying out speedily, honestly and efficiently the programme they had shaped in the course of our anti-imperialist struggle before and after independence. The working class and its allies did not see this point.

It was this insufficient understanding of and sympathy with our anti-imperialist nationalism which dealt the crushing blow to the new United Front. It stunned the nationalist masses and reduced the United Fronts from being an all-India challenge into mere pockets of sectarian struggles of one kind or another.

A controversy is being carried on between certain constituents of the various United Fronts over the character certificate given to the Muslim League by one party and to the Jana Sangh by another. Had the working class and its allies done its own job and helped the process of the United Fronts emerging as a new national chal-

lenge to the Congress, instead of liquidating it by adventurist sectarianism, the inclusion of the very devil into one or the other of them would have meant little harm. When there is a tide, the current carries a lot of dirt.

Let it not be inferred from the above that the writer of these lines is against militancy. Far from it, the military is still too much the pivot of our civilization to make militancy dispensable. What this writer has in mind is that the militancy that grows at the expense of organic links between the vanguard and the broad masses is not the right thing to strive for. These links are as vital as the arteries in a living body.

As Sri Cheerath has pointed out,

there is a vital difference between nationalism of Western countries and that in underdeveloped world. In the former it invigorated capitalism that was to overrun the world as imperialism, but in the latter it engendered resistance to the over-lord, which makes it qualitatively different.

The nationalism of an underdeveloped country is not free of all weaknesses. The urge for freedom being its main source of strength, its anti-feudal and anti-monopoly edges remain obscure and embryonic. But the important thing is that they are not altogether absent and can be sharpened if handled with care and competence.

Benares

D. C. Home

Discussion

FRENCH ELECTIONS

MOHIT Sen's article "French Elections" (*Mainstream* July 13, 1968) is not a serious analysis of this important event in the life of France, but one more tirade against Anarchism and Trotskyism in line with his previous article entitled, "France—Old and New Myths" (*Mainstream* June 22, 1968). His 'analysis' of the French events is simple indeed. The French CP has saved democracy in France. It has saved France which would otherwise have been lost by the adventurist action of students and workers. Indonesia would have been repeated in France. Such is the logic of Sen about the French upheavals.

With regard to the June elections, Sen's thesis is equally simple. The elections have shown that the "great red base among the workers of France proved invulnerable," that is, it voted for the CP. The workers

displayed "loyalty and grit" for the French CP which "combined militancy with realism" during the months of May and June and defeated the conspiracy of the 'ultra left,' meaning students and the militant workers. Sen even predicts the future. According to him the militant workers and the students "may retreat into a pessimistic trance" and "their pessimism would be as misplaced as their previous adventurist sally". One looks in vain for a cogent argument in his long article.

Shri Sen seems to be obsessed with Indonesia. The greatest achievement of the French CP, according to him, is that it did not permit Indonesia to be repeated in France. His logic takes the following course: do not take any risk; do not challenge the power of the bourgeoisie; do not confront the exploiting classes; do not seize power, lest "the van-

guard party and the leading class may be decimated (as in Indonesia) by the reaction before it has won the majority of the people for the revolution". And who will decide that a majority of the people have actually been won over for the revolution? All genuinely revolutionary movements have suffered initial setbacks and as a student of history Mohit Sen knows this fact. If Lenin and the Russian Communists had drawn the same lesson from the defeat of the 1905 Revolution, as Sen seems to draw from Indonesia, where would the great October Revolution have been today? If Fidel Castro and his colleagues had drawn the same lesson from the debacle at Moncada, where would have been the Cuban Revolution today? But the 1905 revolution was the precursor of the October Revolution, while Moncada became the herald of the first socialist state in the Western hemisphere. And there were 'revolutionaries' in Cuba, members of the Cuban Communist Party who called Fidel Castro and his vanguard group adventurists, putschists, petty-bourgeois romantists etc. They opposed the armed struggle in the Sierra Maestra on the ground that the majority of the people were not for the revolution; that the objective and subjective conditions were not yet ripe; that armed struggle in the mountains was an adventurist action doomed to failure. Also there were men like Sen in Cuba who accused the youthful revolutionaries led by Fidel as anarchists and anarchosyndicalists. The times are changing fast. Gone are the days when people could be cowed down by labels such as used by Sen in his recent articles. A revolutionary today shall be determined not by his label, nor by his party card, nor even by his words but by his actions, by the position he takes in the struggle against imperialism and the capitalist order.

The June elections do not prove, as implied by Sen, that the majority of the people in France wanted deGaulle. In May the anti-de Gaullist forces outnumbered the pro-Gaullist elements by a long margin. Accord-

ing to practically all serious newspapers, the French people were clamouring for a radical change. They were sick of deGaulle and the paternalistic reactionary system with some progressive trimmings, he had imposed on them. "De Gaulle must quit" was the popular slogan that reverberated all over France in the heroic days of May and early June. But thanks to the incompetence of the Left, particularly the Communists on the one side, and the firmness and the chicanery of deGaulle on the other, the picture changed almost overnight. DeGaulle threw the bait of elections at a critical moment, which was eagerly swallowed by the Communists.

Here are some facts about the June elections:

(1) The Leftist forces were badly mauled, all their constituents together getting 92 seats as against the 193 they had in the previous Assembly.

(2) The Communist vote declined from a constant 25 per cent since the World War II to just about 20 per cent.

(3) The Gaullists won not only in the traditionally conservative countryside but also in the citadel of revolution, in the city of Paris.

(4) The elections led to the consolidation of the Right and resulted in the confusion in the ranks of the Left.

(5) The vacillating middle class and a section of the working class swelled the UDR vote

which increased by 1.2 million between March 5, 1967 and June 23, 1968—its percentage rising from 37.7 to 43.6.

(6) Though Mendes-France lost his seat in the Assembly, his party PSU which had thrown in its lot unreservedly with the striking workers and students made a notable 50 per cent gain over its 1967 position. It increased its vote by 4,00,000, raising its share to nearly 4 per cent of the total votes cast.

The Communist position was most anomalous. They were led by the events to give a call for a general strike and yet none was more anxious to halt it than they. They accepted the May events willy-nilly; they accepted the elections gladly.

The French elections and its unfortunate, though predictable results have not proved, as suggested by Sen, "the sagacity, knowledge and the remarkable realistic courage of French C.P." but the fact, once universally accepted in the Marxist world, that the bourgeois elections cannot produce a revolution, that the negotiating table cannot yield fundamental changes in a given society.

The French events have shown that in the coming days, revolutions are not going to be made by the self-proclaimed vanguards, but by revolutionaries with courage and conviction whether they are Communists or are known by any other name.

Lajpat Rai

FRANCE AND PALME DUTT

Mainstream readers may be interested to know that in the pages of London New Statesman, the role of the French Communists has been sharply criticised by the paper's correspondents, and readers wrote to the editor attacking such criticisms. Among the latter was the noted British Marxist, R. Palme Dutt. In the issue of July 19, New Statesman carried the follow-

ing letter from Palme Dutt under the caption, "Unity of the Left"

—Editor, Mainstream

"One of your correspondents does me the honour of quoting my analysis of the 1919-20 Italian situation, where the main lesson drawn was the disastrous consequence of the absence of a Communist Party and the subsequent degeneration of the situa-

tion into fascism. He then proceeds to apply this analysis to the entirely different situation in France in May, where the leadership of a strong and experienced Communist Party saved the popular movement from falling a victim of ultra-leftist confusions or provocations which could have played into the hands, as the example of Indonesia has shown, a counter-revolutionary coup.

"Your readers should not be misled. If they wish to acquaint themselves with my analysis of the events in France in May, they can find it fully set out in July *Labour Monthly*. (Next issue of *Mainstream* will carry this piece—Editor, *Mainstream*). There I dealt with the 'New Fabian experts in revolution' who have pontificated so abundantly in your pages and in the multi-millionaire press (in accordance

with the modern slogan that 'we are all revolutionaries nowadays except the Communists'). In particular, as your correspondent refers to Lenin and the October Revolution, your readers might be recommended to study the elaborately careful, concrete, factual and even statistical analysis of the disposition of forces Lenin made in judging the moment ripe for October. Even in July 1917, with the armed mass demonstration in the streets of Petrograd, Lenin wrote how an attempt at insurrection would have been premature because 'the army and the provinces could and would have marched on Petrograd.' In October 1917, Lenin showed how the situation had become ripe, not because of subjective revolutionary wishes, but in terms of the objective relations of forces most pains-

takingly enumerated: how the Bolsheviks had won the majority in both the capitals, in the Soviet delegation to Kerensky's Democratic Conference, the entire Baltic fleet and all the Russian troops in Finland, etc. etc. Was there any such ripeness of the situation in France in May 1968?

"In France, the task is for the working class and its party to build up the broad alliance with other social sections against the dominance of big capital, and thus to establish a stable popular majority capable of winning the battle for democracy and opening the road to socialism. This is the task which the French Communist Party has consistently worked and is working to accomplish. In different forms and conditions, this is also our task in Britain.

R. PALME DUTT"

FILMS

Portraying Two Worlds

IN his poem 'To Our Successors', Bertolt Brecht wrote :

*Truly, I live in a dark period.
The innocuous world is stupid. A smooth forehead
Is a sign of insensitivity. The man who laughs
Has merely not yet been told
The terrible news.
To talk of trees is almost a crime
Because it implies silence about so many horrors?
That man there who quietly crosses the street
Is probably out of reach of his friends
Who are in need."*

Although the renowned journalist, story-writer and film-producer, Khwaja Ahmad Abbas has infused his latest film *Bambai Raat Ki Bahon Mein* with the spirit which is permeated in these lines of Brecht, yet it would be wrong to claim that the film convinces the audience fully of the genuine and most urgent need of questioning the basic postulates of the contemporary Indian society, which above every-

thing else is punctuated by glaring social and economic inequalities. But why?

By now it must have become obvious to most of the filmgoers that Abbas' films are not cut out for box-office hits. This is so, to a significant extent, because Abbas does not subscribe to that hollow and bourgeois conception—art for art's sake. On the contrary, Abbas is of the opinion that the value of everything that is artistic can be measured only in terms of the purpose that it serves. The living embodiments of this view are his film: *Sehar Aur Sapna* and *Aasman Mahal*.

Bambai Raat Ki Bahon Mein begins with a bang—an idealist who happened to be a newspaper reporter takes stock of the abject poverty which is attributed neither to God nor to the moody king of monsoon. As if poverty and audience are the two sides of the same coin which can never be separated; there follows the imposing sequence of the plane-dash and the palatial building of the Sethji. The sky-high idealism of the poor journalist would appear to be an exaggeration in the normal course, but when

it is pitted against the down-to-earth realism of the rich Sethji, it serves well the purpose of bringing out the contrast sharply.

But soon the centre of the stage is assigned to crime and accordingly the criminal, Jalal Agha as Johnny assumes the double responsibility of sustaining the interest of the audience and carrying the show to its logical end. Before that end came, the label of tragedy had already been prepared by making the characters on the stage revolve around him. So much so that the beauty queen, Persis Khambata, is shown to be going with him till the end. How is it that so much of sympathy has been evoked by him?

There is no dearth of eminent sociologists, psychologists and literary figures who have viewed crime as a protest, conscious, or unconscious, against the social wrongs which emanate mainly from the unequal distribution of economic resources; particularly when the social security measures are conspicuous by their absence. But the credit of depicting this on the screen goes to Abbas, who has picturised it with dramatic flash-backs.

When Johnny refuses to deliver the bottles, his uncle blatantly and crudely in a fit of anger informs him that he is related to him, only, in the manner in which an abandoned child on the street, having no identity, is related to the passers-by. In the wake of this crudity which could have been made more lively, follows the frantic search for identity. It is here Jalal demonstrates that talent unlike the means of production is not the monopoly of the few and the common-men share at least one thing in common, namely, their search for identity which they have lost in the wilderness of the capitalist jungle.

On top of this comes the bombshell when the rich people to ignite a warm glow in their otherwise complacent heart are shown to be witnessing a boring fashion-parade for the hungry Bihar, which by itself reveals little and conceals more. But Abbas has placed a painting in the background in which the absence of flesh reveals the bare skeletons; the half living and half dead specimens of which are engaged in cynical conversation just in the immediate vicinity of the citadel of wealth. As far as the idea is concerned, it is undoubtedly unique and one is forced to recall the documentary *Lightening of the Years* by Sukhdev. Yet the fact remains that the contrast could have been better projected by a sumptuous dinner presided over by a dummy Minister instead of the fashion parade.

Almost nearing the end, begins the great race, an inseparable part of all the crime thrillers. Even here Abbas manages to capture some moments of truth when the dazzling lights of the car pierce through the gloomy darkness not thick enough to conceal the rows of pavement-sleepers—for whom one night's sleep is as long as the eternal sleep, and the foot-paths which are full of life during the daytime become night (or death) shelters. Needless to say that all this would have appeared more real, only if it had been seen through the eyes of Johnny.

When all this is taken together, the inescapable

conclusion is that Abbas is a past-master of technique. The rape scene of the bootlegger's daughter in the film is not only an example of the excellent technique but it is also an indicator of the extent to which humanity can be depraved when blinded by the passions which are stimulated by wine and wealth and which find free expression in a society steeped in abject poverty. It must be stated that the technical quality could have been more evenly spread over the whole film and by doing that Abbas would have been able to exploit the whole cast which appears to be full of promise.

In this connection, Yunus as the tea-seller, Madhvi as Rosy—the victim of human depravity—and Irshad Panjatan as the bank-clerk who excels in the art of mime—deserve unstinted applause. Most of the newcomers have been picked by Abbas.

But why should the discovery of talent be left to chance and why should there be only one Abbas? There are many in the film industry who do not have 'a smooth forehead'. To mention only few: Sahir, Balraj Sahni and Sardar Jafri. They can come together and by organizing production and distribution of films, can lift our film industry, which happens to be one of the largest film industries in the world, into a new era of activity undertaking the task of creating social awareness about the injustice of inequalities.

—Ved Gupta

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Some Problems of Unity

S. R. NOVOSELOV

STRUGGLE for the unity of the communist movement dictates the comprehensive elaboration of the problem of internationalism in present-day conditions and the proper combination of the national and international tasks of the Communists.

At the dawn of the Communist movement, undertaking the establishment of the first international organisation of the working people, the International Working Man's Association, Marx forcefully stressed the danger of a contemptuous attitude towards the fraternal alliance of workers of different countries and their international solidarity. Such contempt, he pointed out, is chastised by the common discomfiture of the incoherent efforts of proletarians in different countries. The absence of international fraternal alliance of the working class was considered by Marx one of the main reasons why all the efforts to achieve the great goal of the economic emancipation of the working class were futile in the past. "Let us recall the main principle of the international, solidarity," Marx fervently urged. "We shall achieve the great goal we strive for if we firmly spread this life-asserting principle among workers of all countries."

The importance of the international solidarity of the working class and the international unity of the Communists of various countries has further risen in our days. Today the world is the arena of stormy clashes between class forces. The main tendency of our age is further extension and deepening of the revolutionary transformation of the world, successes of world socialism, the working-class and national-liberation movement, the growing influence of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, Communist ideology and policy. The world communist movement has turned into a great political force of world history.

The consequent tremendous increase in the responsibility of Communist Parties to the people of their countries and to the international working class, the wider scale and complexity of the tasks, the rise of unprecedented possibilities and prospects greatly increase the need for the utmost strengthening of unity and international solidarity.

This is taken from the article which appeared in Soviet journal VOPROSY ISTORII KPSS, No. 6, 1968.

At the same time the sharp exacerbation of the ideological struggle between capitalism and socialism is a characteristic feature of the present state of social development. "The entire huge machine of anti-Communist propaganda is now concentrated on weakening the unity of the Socialist countries and the international Communist movement, on dividing the progressive forces of our time and trying to undermine the Socialist society from within," it is pointed out in the decision of the Central Committee of the CPSU taken at its Plenary Meeting in April 1968.

Imperialism which in recent decades has suffered many grave defeats is doing everything to preserve its positions. Alongside military gambles it conducts a subversive political and ideological struggle against the Socialist countries, the Communist and the entire democratic movement, combining methods of terror and violence with deep-laid social manoeuvres. The poison of nationalism is one of imperialism's main new means in the ideological struggle aimed at splitting the progressive forces. It is for this reason that consistent struggle against the manifestations of nationalism and utmost application of the ideas of proletarian internationalism acquire special significance.

The objective foundations for the international unity of the Communist movement have been further broadened in recent decades. Among the objective factors of unity there are constant ones which operate ever since the Communist movement itself arose. There are: first, unity of the main objective—struggle for the victory of socialism over capitalism; second, existence of the common chief enemy—imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism; and, third, the common ideology—Marxism-Leninism, which is creatively being developed by the fraternal Parties' joint efforts.

Alongside this, new factors have appeared now which enhance the role of the international unity of the Communists. This, for example, is the growing tendency towards the internationalisation of economic and political life, internationalisation of the entire revolutionary process. This tendency is based on the development of the contemporary productive forces and the growing interdependence of all the parts of the world economy and politics.

International co-operation of the Communist

Parties has acquired new purpose and meaning with the rise of the Socialist system. The "Appeal on the Convocation of the First Congress of the Communist International", issued as far back as January 1919, pointed to the need for a "complete bloc between the countries where the socialist revolution already triumphed." Relations between the Communist Parties of the Socialist countries represent a new stage in the development of proletarian internationalism, they acquire an ever more comprehensive nature. These relations rest on the economic and political cooperation of the Socialist countries, on specialisation and cooperation in production, cooperation in defence, common struggle for peace and democracy and against imperialism. The Socialist system offers the world revolutionary movement a powerful mainstay and tremendous experience in revolutionary struggle.

A number of Communist Parties in developed capitalist countries, having become a powerful political force in the life of their nations, gained the possibility of exerting essential influence on the trends and entire course of social development in their countries. The extensive activity of Communists in the trade-union movement, the employment by them of the most diverse forms of struggle for the social and economic rights and demands of the working people, participation in the strike movement of the working class and parliamentary struggle, organisation of mass actions in defence of peace and against imperialist aggression and attacks by reactionary, fascist elements, persistent painstaking work to build up an alliance of all the anti-monopoly forces—all these are inalienable features of the present political situation in the developed capitalist countries connected with the growing activity and influence of the Communist Parties. It is understandable that the close alliance of the fraternal Parties in the capitalist world with each other and the Communist Parties of Socialist countries is a prime foundation of all their successes.

At the same time economic integration is under way in the capitalist world, powerful war economic complexes and military political blocs of imperialist powers, opposed to the international revolutionary and national-liberation movement, are being created. This raises still further the role and significance of united action by all the progressive forces and above all their cores, the Communist Parties.

The enhanced influence of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Marxist ideology in the national-liberation movement is a prime factor, which raises the significance of the international unity of Communists in present-day conditions. We live now in the epoch of great national-liberation revolutions when the national consciousness of the peoples who had been oppressed for centuries is swiftly developing. This process encompasses both the peoples of young Socialist states which have made the leap from semi-colonies to the victory of the most advanced social system and the peoples of countries fighting for liberation from the oppression of imperialism. Thus, the growth of Socialist patriotism is combined with an advance of the patriotic sentiments

of the liberated nations. Account must be taken of the fact that the social composition of national-liberation struggle is quite heterogeneous, that petty bourgeoisie prevails among them, which lays a definite imprint on the development of the world revolution. In these conditions the concerting of the positions and the international unity of the Communist Parties is especially important.

The growth of the Communist movement gives rise to ever greater diversity of conditions in the activity of individual Parties and of concrete tasks confronting them. "Giving leadership to the class struggle," it was pointed out in the Political Report of the Central Committee of the CPSU to the 23rd Congress, "is a great and complicated art; today, it is probably more intricate than ever before. The conditions in which the fraternal Parties are waging the struggle vary from country to country. New social strata, whole nations, are joining the revolutionary struggle. They have different traditions, different economic conditions and different experience in struggle. All this affects the activities of the respective Communist Parties."

The advance of the world revolutionary process diversifies the conditions in which the Communist Parties operate because the Parties of various countries are at different stages of the struggle for achieving their aims. Some Parties are in power and are heading the building of socialism and communism; other Parties are fighting against the omnipotence of the monopolies in the developed capitalist countries; other Parties are in the front ranks of the struggle for national liberation. Within each of the three main detachments of the Communist movement the conditions of activity are not similar.

For example, the economic development of countries is not the same, there is also a difference in the class structure of society, in the relative weight of separate classes. The influence exerted by traditions and heritage differ. The Parties' activities are also influenced by differences in the level of class consciousness of the workers, the cultural, ideological and political level of Party members, the maturity of Party cadres. These differences may lead to non-coincidence of positions, to divergences of views on some or other questions.

In these conditions still greater importance is acquired by proletarian internationalism, awareness by all Communists of their internationalist responsibility, by a scientific, Marxist-Leninist approach to formulating the policy and tactics of their Party. Marxists do not elevate into a fetish national distinctions, they resolutely oppose the exaggeration of national distinctions. Loyalty to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, to the international proletarian duty are basic features common to the Communists of all countries in their multifarious activities in any conditions and under any national and local distinctions. "The emancipation of labour," Marx pointed out, "is neither a local nor a national, but a social problem, embracing all countries in which modern society exists."

Lenin made great contribution to the development and deepening of the principles of prole-

tarian internationalism. The entire policy of the CPSU in international affairs has been, and is, based on these principles. "Complete victory over capitalism," Lenin wrote, "cannot be won unless the proletariat and, following it, the mass of the working people in all countries and nations throughout the world voluntarily strive for alliance and unity." Lenin constantly exposed the subversive activities of the exploiting classes and their supporters aimed at disuniting the workers at fanning national discord and enmity. The purpose of these actions, he warned, is to weaken the workers and to strengthen the power of capital. "Capital is an international force," he stressed. "To vanquish it, an international workers' alliance, an international workers' brotherhood, is needed."

Lenin's works give an absolutely clear and precise criterion of internationalism. This criterion is not words but deeds: "There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism, and that is—working whole-heartedly for the development of the revolutionary struggle in one's own country, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy, and material aid) *this struggle, this, and only this*, line, in every country without exception."

This definition of Lenin is remarkable in that it contains not only the essence of internationalism but expresses in an exhaustively clear form one of the prime principles of the activity of the Communists of all countries: the principle of unity and organic combination of international and national tasks. Moreover, Lenin always put in the forefront the international duty and international solidarity of the Communists. "Proletarian internationalism demands...that the interests of the proletarian struggle in any one country should be subordinated to the interests of that struggle on a world-wide scale."

It should be noted that, while giving priority to international tasks, Marxism-Leninism resolutely opposes any under-estimation of national distinctions.

In one of his articles Engels stressed that Communists of different countries needed a community of aims, actions and policy but a community which considered local conditions. Speaking about a joint plan of action of Communists in different countries, Engels wrote: "This is a plan which is freely adapted to diverse conditions of each nation and each locality and nevertheless preserves everywhere its main features, thus ensuring unity of aim and general conformity of the means employed for achieving the common aim—emancipation of the working class by the working class itself."

Lenin repeatedly stressed that the "international movement of the proletariat does not and cannot proceed evenly and in equal forms in different countries..." He put forward as one of the principles of activity of the Communist International that it must take into account "the diversity of conditions in which the respective Parties have to fight and work." He emphasized the importance for the Communists of all countries to be able to "seek out, investigate, predict and grasp" the nationally specific "in the *concrete manner* in which each country should tackle a *single* international task." Thus,

the national activity of Marxist-Leninist Parties as such serves to achieve international tasks. The class aim of each separate Party and of the entire Communist movement coincide: it is to ensure the victory of Communism. It is this general idea that underlies proletarian internationalism.

The Communist Parties of Socialist countries regard as their main national aim above all the building of socialism and communism, and this is the direct attainment of the general, ultimate international aim of the entire Communist movement. The more successful the building of the new society in the Socialist countries, the more possibilities they have for increasing their influence on the entire world revolutionary process and for rendering effective assistance to the world revolutionary movement.

At the same time, to achieve their basic national and international tasks each Socialist country has to co-operate closely with other Socialist countries in the economic and political spheres and, taking into account the international situation, also in the military field. The Communist Parties of Socialist countries consider it their duty to strengthen and extend economic co-operation (in CMEA) and the defensive Warsaw Treaty Organisation. Our Party, it is pointed out in the Resolution of the 23rd CPSU Congress will "continue to develop and strengthen politico-ideological relations with the Communist and Workers' Parties of all Socialist countries in accordance with the principles of Marxism-Leninism, to promote in every way the cohesion of the Socialist community, its might and influence, to extend economic, technical, scientific and cultural co-operation and to cultivate in Soviet people the spirit of friendship and internationalist solidarity with the peoples of the fraternal countries."

He, who endangers the cause of socialism in his country, undermines the unity and co-operation of the Socialist countries and slows down the accomplishment of the principal international tasks of the Communists of the world, the building of socialism and communism. The Mao Tse-tung group is inflicting tremendous harm on the revolutionary struggle. For several years this group, far from advancing socialist construction in China, is trying to impose on the peoples of other Socialist countries a policy of renouncing the construction of socialism and the building of the new society. Thereby it rudely tramples upon the Marxist-Leninist internationalist principles.

The entire activity of the Communist Parties of capitalist countries, designed to develop the revolutionary struggle in their countries, and ultimately aimed at making, in one or another form, the revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism, is of a directly internationalist significance. We refer here to all stages of this struggle, including the prolonged painstaking work of the Parties to spread their influence among the masses, build up the political army of the revolution, taking into account the actual advance of the revolutionary cause, and not ostentatious "revolutionism." Communist Parties of developed capitalist states, working for the achievement of the main class aim in their countries,

mobilising their masses for anti-imperialist actions, take into account the interests of the peoples of other countries fighting against colonialism and imperialism and oppression by foreign monopoly capital. They cannot wage this struggle in isolation.

Alongside tasks of international significance within a country, Communist Parties assume specific internationalist obligations, whose fulfilment they regard as their sacred duty. Struggle against the common enemy, imperialism, its aggressive policy and ideology, utmost support of the revolutionary working class and national-liberation movement in all countries, proletarian solidarity with the peoples of the Socialist countries, struggle for peace, joint effort in the creative development of Marxism-Leninism—all these are common international tasks for all the Parties.

The military brigandage of American imperialism in Vietnam and other aggressive intrigues of imperialists, the persecution of Communists and democrats in different countries, and other reactionary actions against the forces of peace, democracy and socialism affect the interests of all Communist Parties and prompt them to collective effort in organising a rebuff to aggression and reaction. In the present intricate world situation, abounding in stormy events, a common, collective Marxist-Leninist analysis of new phenomena of the world revolutionary process, is urgently called for. Participation in the joint study of problems of the present stage of historic development, questions of the strategy and tactics of revolutionary struggle constitutes one of the prime internationalist duties of the Communist Parties.

Life proves that the activity of Communist Parties in fulfilment of their internationalist duties is a prime condition of their success in the domestic affairs of their country as well. No one has ever succeeded in raising the prestige and role of a Party within a country in isolation from the international solidarity of Communists, avoiding a solution, jointly with other fraternal Parties, of urgent problems of the communist movement.

The internationalist duties of Communist Parties in no way restrict their independence. At the present stage the international community of Communist Parties as such is conceivable only as a voluntary pooling of effort by independent and equal national organisations. Relations of domination and subordination, the hegemony of any Party or group of Parties, interference in the internal affairs of each other—all this is alien to the Marxist-Leninist principles of the Communist movement. Marxist-Leninists regard the solution of problems pertaining to the life of any Party as the prerogative of that Party itself. "The Communist Parties possess vast experience in revolutionary work and none can find the right conclusions for the problems that arise before them better than they themselves," it is pointed out in the Political Report of the Central Committee of the CPSU to the 23rd Congress,

As the Communist movement grew and scored successes, as the cadres of the fraternal Parties re-

ceived Marxist-Leninist schooling and matured, the independence of the Parties was consolidated and the range of questions on which they received instructions from the Comintern was narrowed down. In 1943, the fraternal Parties decided to go over from centralised leadership of the world Communist movement to new forms of international unity. This became possible as a result of the tremendous work of the Communist International on the ideological unity of the Communist Parties and the bringing up of their cadres.

The Communist International played a truly inestimable role in developing and consolidating fraternal ties between the Communist Parties. Formerly these ties were effected only through the Executive Committee of the Communist International; during transition to greater independence they became direct. Subsequently, after the Second World War, and especially after the setting up of the world socialist system, such forms of International unity of Communists as worldwide meetings of Communist Parties, regional meetings, reciprocal consultations and exchange of experience, arose and gained ever greater significance. One of the distinctions of these forms is that they reflect both the greater independence of the Parties and the vital need for coordinating their actions on a world scale, the necessity of elaborating concerted appraisals and conclusions on fundamental questions of the revolutionary struggle.

Marx and Lenin always regarded as a duty of Communists to assimilate the experience of advanced detachments of the movement. Each party has its own experience of the struggle. The experience of separate Parties makes up the common experience of the world Communist movement. The principle of equality between Parties as regards the exchange of experience consists in that the application of this experience is a strictly voluntary matter. Attentively studying the experience of each other, Parties take everything valuable from it that is not only of local but also of international significance. For example, study and creative assimilation of the experience of Bolshevism, the experience of the Leninist Party have played a big part in the development of the entire revolutionary movement and of each Communist Party separately.

"Bolshevism," Lenin wrote, "has actually helped to develop the proletarian revolution in Europe and America more powerfully than any other Party in any other country has so far succeeded in doing..... Bolshevism can serve as a model of tactics for all." And this was the case because the historic experience of the CPSU contained many things that were not of local, not only of national, but of international significance. Bolshevism created the ideological and tactical foundations of the Comintern, Lenin said. The experience of the CPSU offered for the first time in history the most important thing for the revolutionaries of all countries: the socialist revolution and the building of a new society. For the first time in history the laws of this revolution and constructive work were revealed and tested in practice. That is why any attempt to picture the assimilation of the experience of the CPSU by other

Parties as the supposed transfer to other countries of something alien, specific only for the USSR is groundless. It is understandable that there must be no mechanical transplanting of this experience. That would be a distortion of Marxism-Leninism. But it is one thing to oppose the mechanical transfer of experience and something else to discredit the very idea, the very principle of assimilating and utilising the experience of the CPSU. Such discrediting is a favourite method of ideological diversion by the enemies of Communism, who fully realise that the creative application of the Soviet experience imparts great strength to the Communist Parties of other countries.

Internationalism in relations between Communist Parties implies complete democracy, equality and mutual respect for each other's views. No Party has a right to impose its experience on other Parties. Communists understand the independence of parties not in a philistine way, not as "complete freedom of will" of the leaders of the given Party, but as a concrete embodiment of communist partisanship, proletarian internationalist duty and of the basic ideological and organisational principles of the Communist movement. Such an understanding of independence is based on the Marxist philosophical definition of freedom as recognition of necessity.

No references to independence can justify deviations from the Marxist-Leninist general line and programmatic principles of the world communist movement. Their renunciation, the formulation of one's own "special" line which runs counter to Marxism-Leninism—this is no longer independence but self-isolation from the world family of Communists. If on the pretext of independently solving fundamental questions affecting the entire Communist movement, conclusions and assessments, collectively elaborated by the fraternal parties, are neglected, and a struggle is waged against the Communist movement, while the struggle against imperialism is actually curtailed, if under the guise of an independent appraisal of the main political forces in the contemporary world class positions are abandoned, this is no longer independence but a direct concession to the enemy, imperialism, and its ideology, a concession to anti-Communism. It is such, fully justified appraisal that the fraternal Parties give to the present policy of the Mao Tse-tung group.

He who, like the Chinese leaders, renounces joint measures on the Vietnamese question, of course, displays "independence" but this is "independence" not based on communist principles; far from strengthening, it harms the positions of internationalism.

Fraternal Parties take great care to properly combine international and national aims so that growing independence, which is fully natural, should not harm international co-ordinated actions of the Communist Parties, should not be interpreted as a line of curtailing their international cooperation.

The principle of non-interference in domestic affairs of other Parties does not at all presuppose indifference to what is happening in one or another Party, renunciation of an independent assessment of the policy of other Parties. The position of

unzealous and passive observers is alien to Communists.

Can contradictions between the interests of independence of a Party and its international duty arise in the life of separate Parties? Yes, but they must be resolved by the Party's correct policy. Here vigilance is needed to prevent a narrow approach in defining national interests and aims, to ensure a proper analysis of local distinctions and conditions of the Party's activities. A narrow approach to resolving the emerging contradiction can lead the Party to isolation, to the curtailment of its international ties. A direct and open expression of internationalist positions, irreconcilability to manifestations of nationalism, internationalist education of the masses, consolidation of fraternal ties—here are the reliable means in the struggle for eliminating such contradictions.

The experience of the CPSU, confirmed by the practice of other Marxist-Leninist parties, demonstrates that the unity of national and international tasks is not maintained of itself, automatically. A concrete analysis of the internal and international situation is needed in solving national and international problems of revolutionary development. Communist Parties constantly face the danger of both nationalist manifestations and national nihilism, dogmatic contempt for national tasks and conditions. And if our Party at all stages of its development was able to find effective ways and forms for ensuring unity of national and international tasks, this shows that it has always strictly protected itself from any attempts both from the "Right" and the "Left" to counterpose national tasks to international. In so doing the CPSU has always taken into account that in determining national tasks it must in no way run counter to the general interests of the Communist movement as a whole, because this would harm the entire cause of Communism. Unity of national and international tasks immeasurably consolidates the strength of a Party and ensures the achievement of the aims set.

Worthily assessing the rich experience of our Leninist Party, foreign Communist Parties stress the consistent internationalism of the CPSU. Whether it is struggle against imperialist aggression, in any part of the world—Cuba, Viet Nam, or Arab countries—or solidarity with revolutionaries subjected to repression, or help to peoples who discarded the colonial yoke, the CPSU always and everywhere acts from positions of proletarian internationalism.

In recent years Communist Parties have devoted much attention to the ways of overcoming differences arising in the international Communist movement. This question has become especially acute in view of the extensive splitting activity of the Mao

The concluding instalment of S. A. Dange's contribution, "Can a Country Have More than One Communist Party?" could not be published this week. It will appear next week in Mainstream (August 17, 1968)

—Editor

Tse-tung group in the ranks of the revolutionary forces.

The difficulties caused by differences within the revolutionary movement can be successfully overcome, if all the fraternal Parties approach them from positions of proletarian internationalism. Unity of action is the main principle of relations between the fraternal Parties. Coordinated action of all fraternal Parties in the struggle for peace, democracy, national independence and socialism is the main way to strengthen unity.

Presence of differences in the Communist movement on some important questions of theory and policy must not serve as an obstacle to united action in the practical struggle. In the task of eliminating differences the Communists proceed from Lenin's statement that "differences within or between political parties are usually resolved not only by polemics over principles, but also by the course of political developments—it would be even more correct to say, perhaps, not so made by the former as by the latter."

An attentive attitude to positions and different opinions voiced by the Parties, Leninist breadth of

views and adherence to principle are a requisite for maintaining the international unity of the Communists. A discussion is fruitful only if the sides really want to bring out the truth, analyse the essence of differences and arrive at a principled settlement of the dispute on a Marxist-Leninist basis, if in the course of the discussion the common general interests of the Communist movement are considered and it is conducted in forms which do not harm the movement. When the difference in views becomes clear, the dispute must not be aggravated, Lenin advised. It is possible to differ in views temporarily but no war must be waged in that case, he said, it is necessary to remain "allies—politicians",

Lenin repeatedly stressed that in conducting an open polemic tremendous tact and caution must be exercised. Intolerance, anger, distortion of the views of the other side are impermissible in a polemic. He even drew attention to the character of the language employed in a polemic. "It is wrong to write about Party comrades in a language that systematically spreads among the working masses hatred, aversion, contempt, etc, for those who hold other opinions".

BOOK REVIEW

A Painstaking Futility

The Economics of a Backward Region in a Backward Economy, Volume II, by Dr. Kedarnath Prasad
(Scientific Book Agency, Calcutta; pp. 584 + xvi; 1968; Price Rs. 45)

DR Kedarnath Prasad is a very daring person. In spite of rising cost of paper and high charges of printing and binding and without any help from others, he has produced the massive second volume of 600 beautifully-printed pages within a year of the publication of the first one. As he himself states, he has spent his own hard earned money on the preparation and the publication of the book.

This volume like the previous one, tries to study the economy of Bihar in relation to that of other States of India. The author has laboured hard to impress upon the mind of the reader the well-known and oft-repeated fact that Bihar is one of the most backward States in the country;

where notwithstanding vast potentialities for economic advance, the pace of development has been very slow. And that is all.

Dr Prasad fails to show why this has been the fate of Bihar. He does not seem capable of showing why Bihar, despite all its mines and minerals, forest wealth, fertile land and vast manpower has not been able to transform itself into an industrially developed State. This is because he has neither the historical perspective nor analytical insight. In place of convincing arguments and explanations what we find is: "The periodic recurrence of widespread floods in the central part of the North Bihar plain has generated a permanent sense of impending disas-

ter leading to an attitude of passive resignation hardly conducive to the building up of a stable economic climate for industrial activities."

If the author had taken the trouble of going through the history of the past 175 years of Bihar, he would have discovered the causes of its backwardness. He would have known how the zamindari system prevented the utilization of the surplus generated in the economy for the industrial development. He could have also known the impact of the 1857 rebellion which brought Bihar in the bad books of the British Government. Even if he had cursorily looked at the history of his own district and particularly of the Bettiah, the Mad-

huban and the Ramnagar estates and the farming of revenue, he would have been in a better position to understand the reality.

But Dr Prasad has chosen the floods as the culprit. If he had extended his argument further, he would have perhaps thrown the blame on God! Strangely enough, during the struggle for freedom, from the Champaran movement onwards the people did not show any signs of a passive attitude.

Dr Prasad is a hardworking man. He has devoted a great deal of labour to amass a huge amount of statistical data; but there is neither any integration nor any co-ordination. He has not given any thought whether all this labour was at all necessary.

Unfortunately, most of the statistical tables abound in errors and inaccuracies. Ranking of the States in most of his statistical tables is wrong. Besides, the totals, at places, are not correct. All this has happened in spite of the claim that the author has some knowledge of mathematics and statistics too. In this book, there is a page devoted to errata; but nowhere in the errata the mistakes in the statistical tables have been mentioned.

Dr Prasad has not thought it fit to mention the sources of his statistical tables; so it is difficult to check the authenticity of even the arithmetically correct tables. Besides, in Table No. 30, he has failed to mention the unit. It is not clear whether the price is per maund or per kilo or per quintal.

But where it is necessary to give statistical data to support the statements, he fails to produce them. For example, he states that the rates of power are higher in Bihar than in most other States; the reader would have liked to know the extent.

At a number of places, the author has taken recourse to journalistic jargons. Two examples will suffice. On page 39, he says: "The policy of the Central Government is reported to be disastrous for States like Bihar". He does not care to examine this statement. In the next para-

graph, he says: "The State Government is alleged to have encouraged a good many bogus private firms by giving them loans and permits for scarce raw materials and to have discouraged at the same time many entrepreneurs who wanted either to start or to expand their businesses. According to a report in a section of the local press, only those who made heavy illegal profits agreed to share them with unscrupulous politicians and officials." The above statements have been accepted by Dr Prasad without any examination or proof.

According to Dr Prasad the sugar factories are suffering heavy losses because the price of sugar is less than the cost of production and the factories do not have adequate finance to modernise the factories and improve the quality of sugarcane. It seems, he has accepted without any hesitation what the factory owners have dished out to him. There is no mention as to how the sugar factories have been bungling. Let him examine the case of only two factories—Samastipur and Harinagar and then test the validity of his own assertions.

The author has devoted a number of chapters to the discussion of the economic status and problems of industrial labour. But his discussion of the indebtedness of labour is inadequate. He has failed to examine the sources of loans and the rates of interests at which money is borrowed by labour. Had he cared to go through some of the published materials, he would have been able to do a good job.

When he discusses the trade union movement at Jamshedpur, he admits that it has been glorious—but only upto 1947 when Michael John became president of the Union. The learned professor is not aware of the movement's progress beyond 1947 and he does not seem to know that the *Tata-Bari* agreement was not honoured by the Tatas. He says that the John-controlled union has 80 per cent membership. He is not aware of the existence of the popular and representative union

affiliated to the AITUC and led by Sri Kedar Das, Sri Ali Amjad and others. All this arouses suspicion whether Dr Prasad is really a scholar engaged in the search of truth.

Lack of space prevents us from examining the book in detail. But it is necessary that we give some fragments of his thought to indicate the direction in which his mind has been moving. He says: "The adoption of stern fiscal measures and the recourse to onerous industrial and commercial curbs, which had generally accompanied a much higher level of economic development in the advanced countries of the West and which should normally 25 to 30 years hence to our own economy, have been mainly responsible for the present economic stalemate in the country made worse by stiff labour legislation and subversive and unpredictable trade union tactics". Further, there is "a mad rush for turning the country into a socialist economy" and "the dice is heavily loaded against the private sector" and "this sector is at a low ebb". He laments: "It is like killing the hen that lays the golden eggs" and "plucking the goose with maximum squealing". Dr Prasad does not like the politics of the Government particularly the foreign policy; he says "...we also take immense pride and pleasure in brow-beating and maligning our donors and creditors". The learned Professor cynically writes, "This country is rapidly heading towards a Communist State, whether for better or for worse one cannot say readily."

There is no need for us to comment on the above bunch of thoughts. But we must say that we do not understand why the Forum of Free Enterprise and the FICCI have ignored this learned scholar.

The author has given thought to casteism and the place of English in Bihar. He says, "casteism is the intellectual religion today". He claims that the so-called advanced castes are more homogeneous and possessed of greater foresight. The backward castes do not have any

political party to go to except the CPI; but there also, according to his information, the leadership in many States is in the hands of upper castes. He is, thus, doubtful that the CPI can bring about a society where there will be neither the caste nor the class distinctions. Frankly speaking, the lack of knowledge of the socio-economic history of the State is responsible for his muddled thinking and confusion on the question of casteism.

He does not like "the violent shake-up of some of our well-entrenched and in-built socio-economic institutions, for example, replacement of English by Hindi and regional languages as medium of instruction at colleges and universities, abolition of the land revenue system, etc.". So far as his own English is concerned, it knows no grammar. For example, he writes, "with the bringing out of the recent Report on the Small-Scale Manufacture: Rural and Urban, the

National Sample Survey (Fourteenth Round) has, for the first time, thrown light on this important sector of economic activity in respect of which very little dependable data was available upto now."

The book or the major portion of it was written on auspicious occasions like Vasant Panchami, Vijaya Dasami etc. But it seems even then Gods have not helped him to improve its quality.

Girish Mishra

MUSINGS ON CZECHOSLOVAKIA (Continued from Page 12)

the new President of the Czechoslovak Republic: he was one of those who joined the Communist movement as a patriotic General, who had to leave Czechoslovakia during Hitler's occupation and trained up the Czechoslovak troops in Soviet Union which fought side by side with Red Army for the liberation of their motherland. It is interesting to note that Novotny who was so fulsome in his attachment for the Soviet Union managed to send away Svoboda from the Army reducing him to be a mere clerk in a village cooperative.

The ups and downs of the recent developments in Czechoslovakia require no recapitulation. However, certain differences that mark the handling of the present Czechoslovak crisis from the Hungarian crisis twelve years ago, are extremely significant. There is a big outcry about the delay in the return of the Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia engaged in the participation of the normal manoeuvres of the Warsaw Pact Armies. This is a far cry from the march of the Soviet troops into Budapest in 1956. When the present writer visited Budapest within a few weeks of the upheaval, in December 1956, the common question that was raised by many of the critics of the Soviet Union at that time was that the Soviet troops need not have come to Budapest, they could have blocked up the frontier and let contending forces inside the country settle their own scores: and this would not have destroyed socialism in Hungary. In con-

trast, today the extreme Czechoslovak objection has been to the posting of the Warsaw Pact troops along the frontier with West Germany.

The patience exhibited by the Soviet leadership and the leadership of the other socialist countries in dealing with Czechoslovak crisis is in marked contrast to the manner in which they dealt with the Hungarian and Polish crises. Khrushchov flew in to Warsaw in the company of Generals and had an angry show-down with the Polish leadership. In the case of Hungary, even that was not done. In contrast, today the Soviet leadership has not moved unilaterally, they moved in conjunction with the leaders of other socialist states and that the Czechoslovak leadership wanted them to come down all the way from Moscow to have talks on Czechoslovak soil. It is not an insignificant gesture for a big country towards a small neighbour. It is something like the Indian Cabinet minus perhaps Sri Satyanarain Sinha and Dr Ram Subhag Singh going all the way to Ceylon to hold talks on Indo-Ceylon problems. The gesture made by Soviet leadership is almost unprecedented in history on this point.

Little Entente

During the Hungarian trouble, Yugoslav leadership was much more pronouncedly partisan and attacked Soviet leadership in public. Whatever criticism they might have made was through confidential notes and not so much in public.

However, the Yugoslavs'

stand during the present Czechoslovak crisis has also been inspired by dreams of building a Little Entente composed of Rumania, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. In other words, this Little Entente was supposed to be outside the Warsaw Pact. This is in keeping with the traditions of power politics but not of socialist solidarity.

In contrast, a new element in the entire Czechoslovak crisis has been the intervention of a number of leaders of important Communist Parties outside the socialist world. This is particularly true in the case of the French and the Italian Communist leaderships as far as reports go. Their contribution is of major significance for the world Communist movement. The time-honoured propaganda of anti-communism that in any important development in the Communist world, it is the voice of Moscow that alone prevails, that the advice is always one-way-traffic, from the Pope to his disciples. This time it is shown concretely that the World Communist movement has grown mature enough—and the Soviet leadership is found to be in tune with this new spirit of internationalism—to ensure a role of give-and-take between the Communist Parties, no matter whether they are in power or outside power.

This is a new factor in determining the course of development in the relationship between the socialist states. And those who talk about the Big Brother wielding the Big Stick have lost all sense of living history, prattling worn-out shibboleths, cooped up in a nightmare world of their own.

(To Be Continued Next Week)

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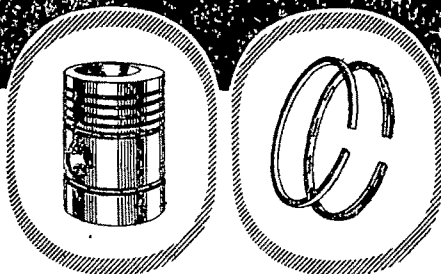
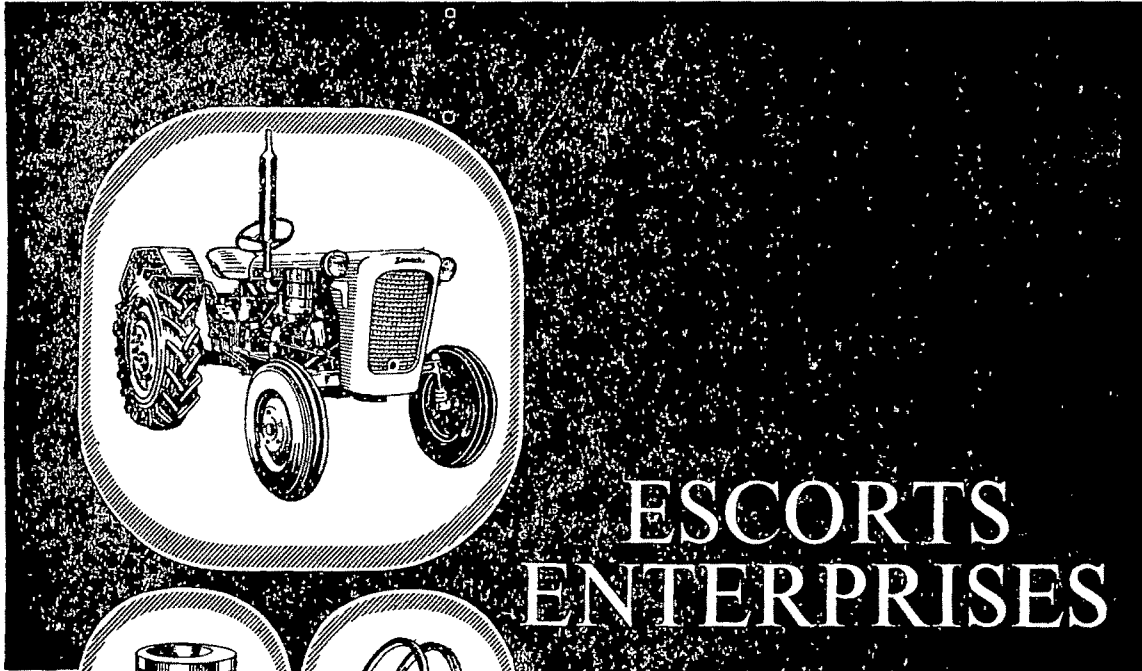
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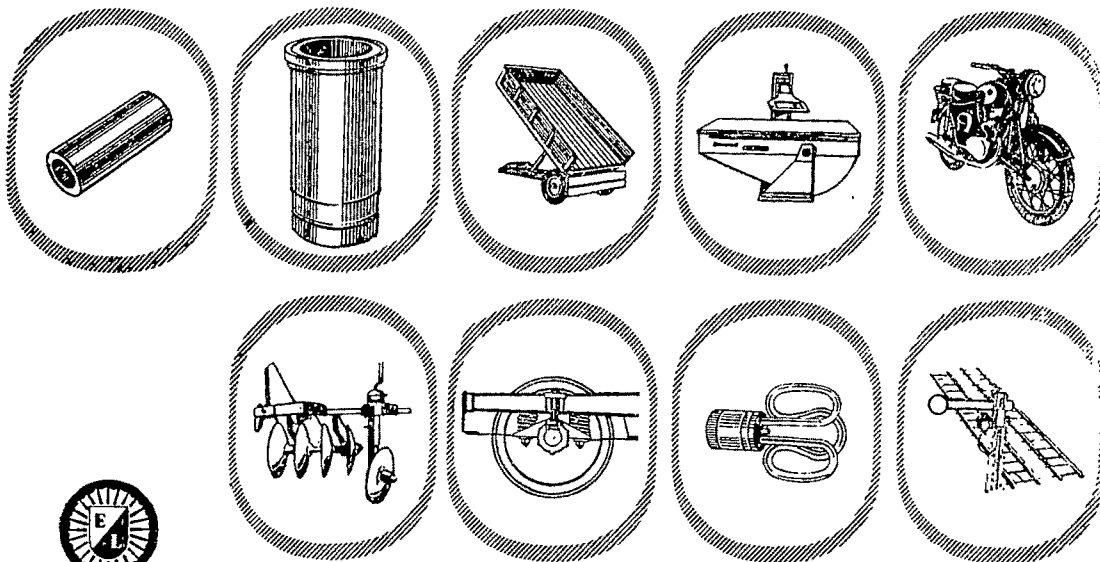
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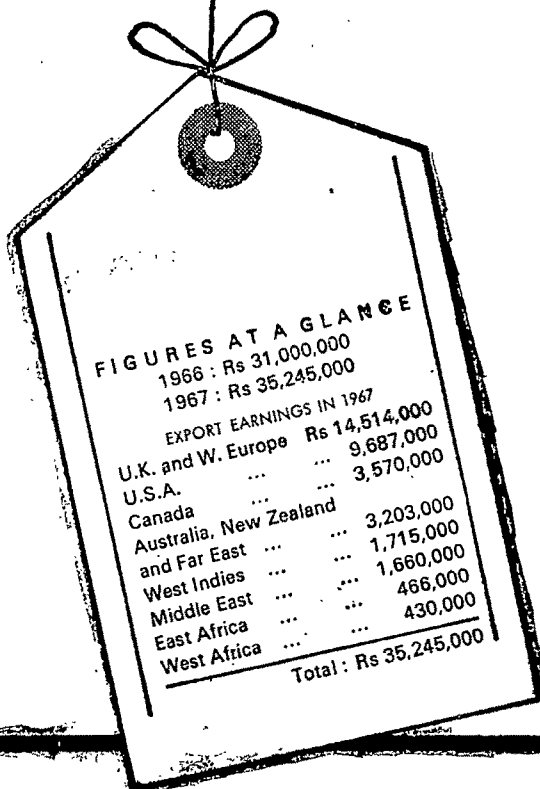
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SRI Morarji Desai holds a key position in the Government. As Deputy Prime Minister, he is next in importance to the Prime Minister, and as Finance Minister, he holds the purse-strings of the Government and thereby wields extraordinary powers over the doings of practically all departments of administration. Besides, Sri Desai happens to be a senior leader of the Congress Party, with claims to eminence and authority inside the Congress High Command.

On top of all this, Sri Morarji Desai has specialised in delivering homilies on morals in public life. He and his cohorts have over the years tried to build up a halo round him of probity and uprightness, and he is supposed to brook no compromise with principles even in political life. Sri Desai himself has consciously helped to spread this aura about his own moral superiority and he has never been tired of making an exhibition of this at home and abroad.

The recent disclosures of the extra-mural activi-

ties of Sri Desai's son in the world of Big Business have not come as a surprise to those who know what stuff Sri Kanti Desai is made of. And by normal standards the father need not have to pay for the sins of the son.

Where Sri Morarji Desai himself comes into the picture is with regard to his decision to induct his son into his staff; and when the objection to this unheard of procedure was raised in Parliament, Sri Desai blandly declared that this worthy son had already given up his connections with the business world. Even subsequent disclosures to the contrary did not make him wiser, and he bravely assured Parliament that his son's formal links with a business house were in the nature of remuneration for the services rendered in the past.

Now, however, more startling material has come to light disproving Sri Desai's stand. By what tongue-in-the-cheek sophistication Sri Desai will defend his position when the issue is debated in Parliament is not known at the time these lines are being written. But before the bar of public opinion, Sri Morarji Desai stands condemned for dishonest equivocation in a desperate bid to defend a totally indefensible position. The nation will be justified in demanding of the Government the removal of such a person who has no right to continue to hold the positions of responsibility that he has so long been entrusted with. And more so when it is believed there are many more ugly skeletons in the Desai cupboard.

Sri Desai's case has important lessons for this country's public life. The tentacles of Big Business have spread to the farthest corners of the administration, and it is they who pull the strings and put pressure for changing and distorting the Government's policies to their own advantage. The infection has gone so deep that a Minister who prattles about morality has no hesitation not only in forging such impermissible links with the world of business but also in misleading the public when he is caught.

More than one Finance Minister in India's twentyone-year-old career since independence had to quit Government for unwholesome links with Big Business. Now has come Sri Morarji Desai's turn to join that august company.

August 12, 1968.

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THE PLEDGE UNREDEEMED

TWENTYONE years ago, when the people of India kept their tryst with destiny, Jawaharlal Nehru declared: "Now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially... Freedom and power bring responsibility... The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity."

The next day, in a message to the Press, Nehru added: "The future beckons to us. Whither do we go and what shall be our endeavour? To bring freedom and opportunity to the common man, to the peasants and workers of India; to fight and end poverty and ignorance and disease;... to create social, economic and political institutions which will ensure justice and fullness of life to every man and woman ... All of us, to whatever religion we may belong, are equally the children of India with equal rights, privileges and obligations. We cannot encourage communalism or narrow-mindedness, for no nation can be greater whose people are narrow in thought or in action."

As the nation enters the twenty-second year of freedom these inspiring words of hope and faith sound distant, vague and unreal. The political scene is today more confused than ever, with the passing generation of party leaders unable to comprehend, much less cope with, the massive, many-sided requirements of the developing situation in the country and in the world.

For twenty long years the party which Jawaharlal Nehru led was engaged in paying lip-service to the ideals he had placed before the country, to the pledges the party itself had given from time to time, and at the same time violating and undermining these by using the power and the influence that freedom had brought into their hands. With rare exceptions Congressmen forgot the dedication of the years of struggle during the years of power. Acquiring office and clinging to it with the help of vested interests of all kinds, urban and rural, became the aim and end of political existence. If Jawaharlal repeatedly harked back to the old pledges and sought to keep his party's sights clear and straight, it was because he was conscious of the steady deterioration in the quality of the men on whom he had to depend for the translation of his own ideals and those of Gandhiji into reality; his was verily a cry in the wilderness, although his too were power and popularity among the masses which few men have had in human history. This was the paradox and the tragedy of Jawaharlal, and of India.

The dominance of the Right-wing in the Congress and Jawaharlal's constant and unremitting struggle against it are part of history. Nor is it unknown that there was always a section in that party which had firm faith in the Nehru ideals and strove to strengthen his hands to the extent their position in the party permitted. Outside the Congress the Left was divi-

ded from the start, for various reasons. The Left outside the Congress failed to see the importance of forging links that would bring about the emergence of a solid socialist front. On the other hand, over the years the Leftist forces went on splitting more and more, and sought often to blame Nehru and his slogans for their own inadequacies and failure. The masses were certainly in ferment; they expected vast changes in their conditions of living and their economic and social prospects as a result of the achievement of freedom, and their mood of dissatisfaction with the slow pace of change and with the patent increase of wealth, power and influence in a few hands could well have been directed into such action as would have made it impossible for those in power to engage in conspiracies to deny the common people the fruits of freedom. It was the opportunity provided by history to the forces of progress; the leaders of these forces betrayed history by their petty quarrels and by their utter inability to communicate with the masses and guide them. If Congressmen betrayed the Gandhian-Nehru ideals by preferring self-aggrandisement to service and became corrupt beyond words, the other parties, particularly the progressive ones, let down the masses of India by preferring endless disputes among themselves over meaningless phrases and postures to the difficult task of social disabilities the struggle for equality of opportunity and removal of social disabilities above all else.

What has happened in these twentyone years of freedom? It is true that huge projects have sprung up in many parts of the country. These in the long run will undoubtedly add to the nation's total prosperity. It is true that agricultural production has increased substantially. Industrial production too has increased and has been greatly diversified. Laudable efforts have been made with the help of friendly countries to establish a sound industrial base. The standard of living in some pockets here and there, mainly urban, has gone up. These are the facts, with supporting statistics, that are invariably thrown at Leftist critics of the policies and actions of those occupying the seats of power.

As against this, the balance-sheet has a minus side which more than offsets the plus side. Economic inequalities have increased rather than diminished. Big Business houses have bigger ramifications and are more powerful today than at any time in the past. They are so powerful in fact that they are in a position to set up candidates of their choice under different party labels and use these to block not only measures in the interest of the common people but also investigation of the many shady transactions which result in increasing their hold on the national economy and corruption among politicians and bureaucrats. Prices have been allowed to soar

unchecked, the authorities being content with going through pseudo-Gandhian appeals to hoarders, profiteers and black money operators for a change of heart. The real wage of the industrial worker has suffered steady decline, while the agricultural worker has by and large not found any change in his plight. Even the distant Karachi resolution, inadequate as it is in the new context, reads like a charter of demands valid today. Along with the big industrialist the big landlord has flourished, thanks to the powerful lobby he has been able to build up at the State level mainly and also at the Centre. Thus the so-called land reforms, announced with great fanfare, were easily reduced to a grim mockery, leaving the landless peasant precisely where he was before independence. The Community Development projects and the Panchayati Raj programme, whatever the intentions of their sponsors, have had only marginal impact on the age-old pattern of rural life with the rich peasant and the moneylender holding the bulk of the population to ransom.

This broadly is the picture of today's India. That the masses are disillusioned and seek deliverance was made clear by the results of the Fourth General Election. The people wanted radical change; it is not difficult to guess in which direction, considering the nature of their unsatisfied needs. The General Election indeed was one more

historic opportunity for the forces of the Left to have consolidated themselves and attempted to provide a clear-cut alternative to the people. Unfortunately the Left was still divided and its leadership was in no mood to respond to history's call with enthusiasm and vision. The result, inevitably, was the makeshift united fronts and coalitions that emerged in several States. Not based on common policies and programmes but only on a negative attitude shaped by popular disillusionment rather than by popular aspirations, from the start these fronts were unequal to standing up to the machinations, of Right-wing elements and their backers in the Congress and outside it. The mid-term polls due in three States provide yet another opportunity to the Left; but there is as yet no indication that the parties concerned have the capacity to grab it purposefully.

Thus the twentysecond year of freedom opens with a big question mark: Will the progressive forces in India meet the grim challenge posed by the growing Rightist consolidation represented by the combination of not only reactionary Congressmen and Swatantraites with big business houses but by the close ties established between these and the forces of communalism which despite Nehru's promise are today stronger than everbefore?

—C. N. Chitta Ranjan

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HOW PUBLIC SECTOR IS MALIGNED

A disconcerting feature of economic situation and discussion on economic policies for some time has been that the failures and frustrations with which our people have been faced have been taken advantage of by vested interests to distort and undermine confidence and subvert basic policies. Their most notable achievement in this respect has been to bring into disrepute the role and function of the public sector in national economic development.

Things have gone so far that it has become a fashion, even among those who profess to be Leftists, to deride all public sector enterprise and to jump at it all the time on the basis of partial and one-sided information supplied by interested quarters or disgruntled individuals.

The inefficiency of public sector managements in many cases of course adds grist to the mill of its detractors. But instead of looking into the causes of inefficiency wherever it is to be found and taking measures which will remove such causes and help the public sector undertakings to improve their performance, there is a widespread tendency to pick on whatever may appear amiss, real or imaginary, to run a general campaign against the public sector itself, to undermine faith in it and to demoralise its management. This naturally suits the private sector monopolies who take full advantage of such doings in their drive to restrict the scope of the public sector and to make it serve their own special needs and requirements.

The recent meeting of the representatives of Big Business which the Planning Commission

convened to discuss the problems of formulation of the new Fourth Plan was quite revealing in this context. The occasion was used by the top tycoons in the country not merely to advance their particular individual claims or a policy-orientation which will help private business to grow. Their most important demand was that no public-sector programme should be undertaken without prior consultation with the concerned representatives from the private sector.

What it implies is that the first option on any programme or project should vest in the private sector and the pickings for the public sector should be of only residuary nature in the overall programme of economic development. This would signify a major departure and an ominous contrast to the hitherto proclaimed official policy of holding the commanding heights of the economy in the public sector.

How far the tycoons will be able to have their way in the final shape of the Fourth Plan is yet difficult to say. But what is noteworthy is that such a demand was put forth with great self-righteousness in the name of efficiency, returns and good performance. Among the votaries of private enterprise, it is of course taken as axiomatic that private enterprise is more efficient. What its leaders are now trying to do is to get this myth officially and generally accepted. Nobody has really cared to prove that the private sector has done better in key and complex branches of economy, on the strength of which it can claim any such superiority. In fact, a close examination will show quite the contrary. And yet

matters are being so contrived that the public sector will be seen in much poorer light than is warranted by facts, the bureaucratic inefficiency and the complexity of the tasks entrusted to it notwithstanding.

In the midst of such adverse climate which has been created by vested interests, the public sector has often to function not only with targets scaled down but under severe handicaps as well. It is becoming the common experience of most public sector managements that such of the facilities, essential import licenses or foreign exchange allocations that they require for their work are far more difficult for them to secure than is the case with any Big Business House for far less essential purposes. This happens even in such cases where speedy completion of the public sector programme, as for instance in oil exploration or fertilizer production, has immediate relevance to large-scale import substitution and savings on free foreign exchange expenditure.

The much publicised export incentive arrangement whereby export earnings or import substitution will entitle an enterprise to allocation of free foreign exchange to import its requirements from the best and cheapest source of supply is also applicable only to the private sector and is not extended to the public sector enterprises even when some of the public sector enterprises, among them the steel plants, have given a far better account of themselves in pushing forward exports than the private sector.

There is also the policy of tying up all public-sector projects, even the most urgent and important, to foreign credits of various

kinds which not only add to their costs but also delay them for long times because of the prolonged negotiations to secure suitable credits. In the case of the two coal-based fertilizer plants which the Fertilizer Corporation has proposed to take up, for instance, their launching might well be delayed by over a year while the use of commercial credit will enhance their capital cost by as much as ten percent.

These are issues of larger economic policy and the management of our foreign-exchange budget and will have to be resolved on a more fundamental basis. But what can and must be done immediately is to rescue the public sector from being subjected to unseemly and vicious criticism, and attack which is designed by the vested interests only to harass and demoralise its management and obstruct its normal working. The current campaign against the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd., the public-sector enterprise set up with Soviet assistance, is quite revealing.

With its third unit, the antibiotics plant at Rishikesh, also going into production and the plans to put its products in the retail market by October, the IDPL can be said to have come of age. It will still have to face many complex problems and to resolve many difficulties before it is able to stabilise and enlarge its production to the rated capacities of all its units for the manufacture of surgical instruments (at Madras), synthetic drugs (at Hyderabad) and antibiotics (at Rishikesh). It is attempting to do this as quickly as possible with the help of the Soviet specialists who are responsible for fulfilling initial performance guarantees of the processes and plants supplied by them. At the same time, a sales organisation is being set up which will be responsible for undertaking the complex task of marketing the products in stiff competition with the entrenched vested interests, mainly foreign.

Drugs and Pharmaceuticals represent not only a very vital field of human need but also a field in which the grip of inter-

national monopolies, known to be the most ruthless and unscrupulous of their kind, is probably the most tight. The fact that the IDPL will at last make a significant break into this field should have been an occasion for much satisfaction in the country.

But, precisely at this delicate stage of its operation, both in production and distribution, it has been drawn into all sorts of vicious controversies which must be giving comfort to international monopolies which have so far exploited unhindered the Indian market directly or in collaboration with certain Indian parties.

It is hardly necessary to put up a defence of the IDPL or to outline its achievements so far. There is also much hard and painstaking work before the organisation before it will begin to give adequate financial results. But one outstanding fact that must be noted and which is crucial for drugs and pharmaceuticals producers is that its products will not only stand comparison with the product of any other producer but will be superior in quality and purity to the highest standards that might be set in the pharmacopias of any country in the world. In addition, the IDPL products will sell in the market at prices in competition with others and will make a determined attempt to bring the prices down in case of some of the essential drugs. The very fact that some of its first products have already found an international market is indicative of their quality as well as price competitiveness.

It is interesting that the campaign against the IDPL, from whichever source it might have emanated, generally revolves around three issues of substance though a large number of personal and petty matters are also dragged in to cloud the basic issues. These three issues relate to the product mix of the antibiotic plant, the sales arrangements and the time taken by the plant to start production.

It has been objected that the Rishikesh plant will manufacture common antibiotics and not some of the more sophisticated, higher priced antibiotics. Those who raise

this objection obviously do not understand the motive of those who might be inducing such objections. The common antibiotics are what are required in very large quantities to fight diseases on a mass scale. The Rishikesh plant with its rated capacity of 290 tonnes of eight types of such antibiotics was conceived precisely with this understanding. Once these are produced, it might be possible to take up the production of small quantities of sophisticated, higher priced service antibiotics which are needed in much smaller quantities. Even the Soviet Union has the know-how to produce three out of 13 such service antibiotics. The rest are all riddled with patent rights and what not. Those who advocate the ditching of the main production programme of the plant in favour of service antibiotics in the name of their large profitability are obviously trying to embroil the IDPL in patent fights and litigation to the detriment of its production programme so that the international companies can merrily keep on importing common antibiotics on a large scale within the country. It may, however, be mentioned that work has been initiated for producing three service antibiotics with Soviet help.

It is complained that the IDPL is setting up an elaborate sales organisation. But this is very necessary. The critics do not realise that the private drug companies, much smaller than IDPL, maintain hundreds of sales agents in addition to distributing as samples as much as 10 to 12 percent of their entire production to remain in the mar-

FOR NEXT WEEK

Owing to lack of space the further instalments of S. A. Dange's article "Can a Country Have More Than One Communist Party?" and N.C.'s "Musings on Czechoslovakia" could not be published this week. They will appear in next week's Mainstream.

—Editor

ket. The IDPL will have to compete in a market in which foreign monopoly interests are deeply entrenched and unless it has an adequate organisation for the purpose-it will make little headway even if as a public-sector organisation it will not adopt the unethical practices that promoters of fancy drugs with fancy brand names indulge in. An example of the kind of closely-held market IDPL has to reckon with may be had from a recent tender called by no less an authority than the Director of Health Services at the Centre. He called for certain quantities of "Novalgin", the brand name of a drug which IDPL also manufactures. It was only when IDPL protested that the tender had to be revised to call for the drug in its generic name of Analgin and thus opening it to IDPL also to take a bid which was earlier foreclosed. The foreclosure of the market with the aid of samples, brand names and patents is a technique developed

to almost perfection in the drug industry.

In spite of the novelty and complexity of this line of production, the patents hurdles and what not, which are all closely guarded secrets of a handful of international companies, thanks to the Soviet assistance and the free supply of its processes, India has been able to enter this important arena. The remarkable achievement of the Indian-Soviet collaboration is that a complex plant such as at Rishikesh will enter the market with four products at once within six years after the signing of the first agreement for supply of equipment by the Soviet organisations for it. No other plant, even when it is hardly one-tenth the size of the Rishikesh plant, can show comparable performance in the private sector in India.

The current campaign against the IDPL which has been timed to the setting up of IDPL sales network has been obviously con-

ceived to scare those who might take on its agencies as dealers. But more sinister measures have been taken by the international companies with the same end in view. Some of these dealers have been threatened with cut off from other agencies if they accept IDPL agency. Threats are also being held out of dragging the IDPL to courts for infringement of patent rights on the spurious ground that the Soviet Union has passed on processes which are protected by patent law in force in India even if it is not so in the Soviet Union.

The IDPL is gearing itself to face all these ordeals in the way to establish a truly national drug industry. All that it may expect in this struggle should be extended to it—understanding and sympathy and not campaigns which are hardly based on facts or are inspired directly or indirectly by vested interests.

—Balraj Mehta

DANGERS TO NATIONAL INTEGRATION

"The greatest menace which our country faces today is that of communalism".

"The second menace is that of provincialism, or parochialism, actuated by the same sentiments which are behind communalism".

"A serious danger to national integration and perhaps one of the causes of other menaces is the persistence of inequality".

"Another factor which can either unite us or create barriers is that of language".

IN THE WORLD AS IT EXISTS TODAY NATIONAL INTEGRATION IS THE VERY CONDITION OF OUR SURVIVAL.

Smt. Indira Gandhi,
Prime Minister of India
(At the meeting of the
National Integration Council
at Srinagar).

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PRH/43

Corporate Contributions to Party Coffers

KAMAL NAYAN KABRA

CORPORATE business in India, as elsewhere, is governed by a statute. The very nature of corporations make them acquire legal personality and legally-sanctioned, standardised methods of organisation and management. The companies' practice of making contributions to various political parties has been authorised by corporate laws for long. The equally old and persistent efforts to get this provision of the law scrapped lately gathered such a great deal of support in political circles and from expert opinion that the Government, on the floor of Parliament, committed itself to put a "legal" end to this practice.

The realisation of this pledge could have spelt a significant change in the nature, working and internal alignment of forces for some of the most important political parties. However, one can expect such an outcome only on the relatively big assumption that this law, when enforced would be honoured by the people who put it on the statute book and enforced by the executive wing. The actual realisation of this objective certainly would have been a landmark of some significant consequence. It would have borne out the thesis advanced in certain quarters that legal changes not impinging on the basic social character could unleash forces transforming the character, even though partially, of the political parties and processes.

However, before such illusions could make even temporary triumphs, the dialectics of the situation asserted itself. A dominant section of the Congress and the Big Business has expressed

itself against this move. Their ground for this eleventh hour protest is revealing. They argue that the proposed measure, if voted into law, would only turn what is open and legal at the moment into something clandestine and illegal. And clandestine might be illegal but it is also at the same time beyond the reach of law. How true, indeed, it is that law is meant only for the decent and law-abiding lot of unsmarts! To maintain that such a law would drive the benefactors and the beneficiaries of such a deal to carry them out under the table implies that given the prevailing situation, no law and law-enforcing agencies are strong enough to weed out this practice. The Congress is the biggest partaker of these corporate gifts and this hue and cry by the Congressmen is their own admission of their inability to politically survive in the absence of these doles. Hence one can rediscover the true nature and abiding socio-political complexion of the Congress. The inability of these laws to alter the basic socio-political nature of the socio-political organisations is demonstrated afresh.

This argument has another not-so-hidden implication. It suggests that it is possible for mass political parties with open organisation and practices to receive underhand donations worth lakhs and crores of rupees. And despite the legend of calling the corporate-sector enterprises "public" limited companies, working under the supervision of the Company Law Administration, it suggests the possibility of gifting away crores of rupees without even the audi-

tors coming to know of it! It is common knowledge that such sinister happenings do take place. Then what do our joint-stock companies represent? Are these undertakings displaying some of the characteristics of the hideous underworld? A support from such soiled sources speaks volumes for the public morality and socialism of these parties. Have the authors of this argument realised that to be consistent with this logic (that what could be evaded need not be illegalised) they would be obliged to overhaul the whole gamut of our civil and criminal laws?

These hollow but revealing arguments seem to belittle the importance of this question. The issues involved here are significant in many respects. In what follows we examine the different aspects of corporate contributions to the coffers of political parties.

Corporations are business enterprises, mostly large-scale and in the modern organised sectors of the economy. Their characteristics are well-known. Being dependent on a wide and fluctuating base of urban shareholders for its capital requirements, corporations come to be controlled by a hard core of relatively permanent and active group of shareholders. This domineering minority imposes its nominees on the Board of Directors and on the top managerial and executive positions. The great mass of shareholders could better be treated as a special type of creditor who entrusts the corporation with their money for purposes of some specified economic activities with a view to obtain dividends. In the light of these trite and

hackeneyed observations about the nature of corporate business we may ask the question about the justification of corporate donations for political parties.

First, it is true that the shareholders delegate decision-making powers to the Board of Directors, including the decision regarding the rate of dividend and the amount of retained profits. The question is: Are these decision-making powers limited by any consideration or are they unconstrained? The answer obviously lies in the Memorandum of Association, setting out the purposes of corporate activity. The company obtains resources for utilising in the pursuit of the objectives clearly spelt out in the relevant documents. Hence the question becomes transformed into one about the conformity of political donations with the economic objectives for which the corporation is brought into being. Here it has been a favourite argument of the protagonists of corporate contributions for political purposes that these donations, are essential for the preservation of a regime helpful for the carrying out of corporate activities.

This argument presumes a number of things. If, as a result of the contributions to political parties, specially the ruling party, the corporation succeeds in obtaining a *quid pro quo* in the form of free pricing and output policies, easy and economical availability of raw materials from indigenous and external sources, pro-employer labour laws etc., one can say that these contributions, a small share of the total profits of the corporations, are justified in the sense of making largest profits for the shareholders. Then being a small deduction from the dividends, these donations derive for the corporations definitely definable quantum of dividends. Yet, it is a narrow view of the matter. From the point of view of a large body of shareholders these additional, probable dividends mean only a small increment in earnings. But the contribution that these donations make to the block shareholders with

controlling interests and representation on the Board of Directors and executive echelons are substantial.

The most important *quid pro quo* for these donations to obtain is to bring the political top brass of the parties, specially of the party in power, into a relationship of close contact and affinity with the money and business power. For the latter, the most important, the most prized, the most crucial and lasting gain accrues in the form of liberal grant of licences for entry into ever new and important spheres of production mostly with foreign collaboration, liberal and convenient availability of finance from the public-sector financial institutions, helpful changes in the structure of direct taxes, specially in the form of wealth, inheritance, gifts, expenditure, profits and income-taxes and the entry of the private sector in the commanding sectors of the economy.

It is no accident that the progress of the policy of nationalisation met its death even before its proper birth. Nor is it any wonder that after the nationalisation of the Imperial Bank of India and the life insurance companies (where the confrontation of Dalmia Insurance Empire with the powers that be, it is no secret, had a decisive influence), the policy of nationalisation has fallen a prey to so-called pragmatism. By dispensing monetary patronage the Big Business has created a solid clique of stooges in the highest organs of the ruling party. They have phenomenally expanded their business on account of the indiscriminately liberal and blind industrial licencing by their political co-operators. Hence in this case it is difficult to say who is the benefactor and who is the beneficiary.

Thus the capacity of the tycoons to control ever more companies by manipulating share-markets, financial support from the public sector financial undertakings, has increased manifold. And with this comes their capacity to impose their minority control over corporate enterprises. This happens at the cost of the scattered mass of ordinary

shareholders. The economic and political powers enjoyed by the Big Business are far in excess of their financial resources. The institution of political contributions from the coffers of joint-stock companies play no small part in this process. Thus the contributions made out of the shareholders' resources by enlarging the powers of the tycoons go against the interests of the large mass of shareholders, neutralising whatever gains they derive through concession in corporate taxation, in price, output, raw-materials and foreign exchange controls. Thus if we look at the corporations as comprised of three distinct interest groups (forgetting the workers, consumers and the national economy at large for a while) of the Board of Directors, the top executive personnel and the large body of small shareholders respectively, we discover that political contributions by corporations are a great boost to the first two groups at the cost of the third group.

It is true that these contributions are only a small part of the corporate profits. Hence the argument that these contributions deflect resources from ploughing back into growth channels loses much of its weight. But this consideration also points toward another sinister possibility. If the diversion of a small proportion of their resources could vitiate the political climate so much, one can well imagine the strength that money power can have by a determined mobilisation of its resources. The influence that this money could have on the election of the leader of the majority party in Parliament could signal disaster for all that our Constitution stands for. The tax law enables such donations to obtain reductions in the tax liability of the corporations. Thus these contributions also mean a loss to the State Exchequer.

One may argue that if the trade unions are allowed to participate in active politics and give support to political parties, why this spate of angry objections when the corporate bodies do the same? Why this discrimination?

A further question might be asked about the consistency of this practice with the democratic objectives. Would not the ban on corporate contributions to political parties violate the democratic freedom of some institutions to participate in the political activities of their choice and in the way they choose to participate? To an extent, the answer to this question would depend on one's idea of democracy and democratic freedom. But whatever the concept of democracy, a distinction ought to be made between the rights of individuals and those voluntary associations. In the case of associations the answer certainly would depend on the purpose for which the association is formed. Corporations are not formed for the pursuit of political objectives. I wonder whether the Company Law would approve of a memorandum of association of a joint-stock company explicitly stating

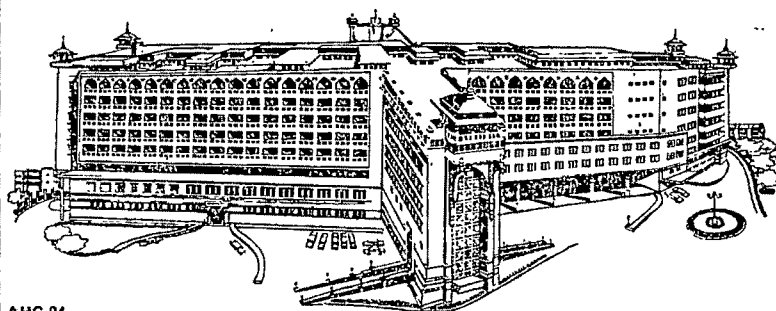
the objective of participating and carrying on political activities. In the absence of such a clear resolve to promote and form a corporation for political purposes making contributions to the hidden or open funds of political parties is not only an abuse of democratic freedoms but also a perverse use of an inherent feature of corporations ensuring a divorce between the majority of volatile, passive shareholders and centralised, minority shareholding management.

It is suggested that the incorporation of a provision permitting payments to political parties in the articles of association of the corporation can help remove the doubts on the score of the legality and justice of such donations. This is indefensible. The articles of association must be in keeping with the objectives of the corporation and any and every extraneous matter cannot find a place in it. Hence the

basic question remains if joint-stock companies could be floated for political purposes and whether such joint-stock political companies can function and succeed.

The corporations are a dominant economic institution of the developed, modern sector of the economy. By sheer dint of their economic powers, they have a great impact on the society. By further allowing them to directly influence the political processes through naked money power would very adversely affect the capacity of our polity to fulfil the aspirations of the masses. If this ban is in fact imposed, direct penetration shall come to an end. However, it would not mean more than that. So long as the huge concentration of economic power continues, it will find ways and means of asserting itself. Thus the victory represented by this ban would only be partial—just a beginning of a long and arduous process.

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Historically Speaking

MAJOR-GENERAL F. HABIBULLAH

To come to a solution of the communal problem in India, one has to have to clear the proper historical roots. The Concise Oxford Dictionary which was published in the thirties of this century even gave it one precisely Indian definition, "pertaining to the Hindu and Muslim communities of India." It really means, of course, pertaining to a commune or getting together in community!

How many people in this sub-continent are conscious that the religious communal problem only exists in India? The Fascist persecution of the Jews was on the race issue rather than on religion, and, even the Arab-Israel problem is more Eurasian than religious.

As a Muslim, one must frankly admit that Mr Jinnah and his League when they had fought on a platform of freedom from Hindu domination, should have displayed at least that tolerance for which not only men like Akbar were reputed, but which, in spite of deep rooted feudalism of the Islamic world yet tolerated all religions and faiths where Islam and other faiths thrived cheek by jowl for centuries. I am not thinking of West Pakistan only but of the East, where Hindu masses were constantly Bengali and where Tagore and Nazrul Islam thrived side by side. Even here the non-Muslims are becoming thinner on the ground. It is true that certain economic attractions have drawn them out; but official disfavour and steady encroachment on their security have hastened the process. We in India have also abetted by

applying the term, refugee, to them and calling any Muslim from there as infiltrator. The major tragedy has been in the West where scarcely a Sikh or a Hindu is visible. To crown it all, the Pakistan Constitution makes the country a Muslim Republic.

I have never believed and I do not think that saving of vested interests and entrenched middle class power is ever going to solve the problem. These interests and classes are the very ones that have carried the seeds of hatred and have by and large nurtured them. In India castes religions represent such vested interests.

Muslim and Hindu claim, counter-claim, blame and counter-blame are all with some vestige of some historical truth. But where does it lead us to? The creation and tradition of culture, life and belief, their past clash and adjustments are all true, and they are used as excuses for adopting points of view today. The feudal overlord was usually a Muslim; but his allies and co-overlords were mainly Rajputs. Their advisers were high Brahmins or Jains and their other associates were Kayasth, forming the aristocratic backbone. Beyond these castes (and from within too) the other Indian people of all creeds formed the depressed feudal masses. It is therefore a dangerous simplification to divide forces into Hindu and Muslim in that way. For within the frame-work I have stated, there was a great deal of inter-alliance internecine enmity, feudal hate and friendship. This was the proper feudal system of

society into which burst the commercial and then the industrial society of Europe. Had they swept it aside the Europeans would have done a service to the Indian people; but they only overcame feudalism enough to meet their own ends. They preserved and cherished a lot of it for their own further convenience. So grew up a class of effete aristocrats at the top. The adviser and clerical classes required no great inducement to change service from that of the landed gentry to that of the new commercial pioneer of Europe. The essential difference between Mir Jafar and Omi Chand was that the former sought wealth and power while the latter sought wealth and livelihood. The British knew how to play the one against the other.

Of course, these divisions and castes were not inflexible. The Muslim Khojas being traders did not come into opposition, but the feudal Brahmin Peshwas did. Broadly it was the Brahmin Kayasth Khatry and Hindu of caste that first came into cooperation with the Era of the Industrial Revolution. Later the peasants submitted as a class, to co-operate with the new overlord rather than suffer extermination, the artisan and hired manufacture having been earlier decimated; the weaver having his thumbs removed to avoid facing competition with machines. The artisan was largely of Muslim stock and lived in cities. So, a large urban section began to consist of wealthy and miserably poor Muslims. Some who fled set up their trade in villages. Avadh, Hydera-

bad and many of the princely states still have some well-defined survivals of the older society; but, the Muslims in northern India became a well definable community, based on craft and leadership in society.

Forgive and Forget

It was natural then, for the Muslims to witness with fear their own decline, as they began to see themselves left behind in the march of progress. The Maharatha, Rajput and other feudal Hindu classes found themselves in the same boat to a lesser extent. It was not difficult for Lokmanya Tilak to create a new consciousness in which he made out the Muslims to be intruders like the British, thus to draw feudal Hindu elements into confused and partial cooperation with their high caste allies. What the British might have found difficulty in doing he did; but in solidifying such opposition to the British he played into their hands. It would have happened any way; for the British by then hated the new Frankenstein; so they inevitably had to switch to a religious minority base. What better way than to forgive and forget?

While foundations were being laid for independent Hindu education at Calcutta and Benaras, the first steps to rehabilitate the Muslims were to make room for them in the administration. The first modern institution of teaching was started at Aligarh as a preparation for this. It is to be noted that Sir Syed Ahmed was particularly keen on the teaching of Science and Mathematics. Of interest also is that many more Hindus than Muslims first studied there. His idea was that young Muslims should come in touch with everything modern and intellectual in their country. But, so backward was the feudal Muslim that Sir Syed was denounced as a 'Kafir'. There was some ground for scepticism, because Muslims then living knew that Sir Syed was doing what he was, with the blessings of Englishmen.

When the twentieth century dawned, the legal and intellectual professions were almost

totally manned by non-Muslims. The political reflection of this was that as the democratic movement strengthened, Muslims as a community were even thrown out of it, and led by the Aga Khan, straight into the arms of the sons of their ruthless conquerors. The erstwhile money-lenders who were now rising fast joined the intelligentsia. The best hope left for the British was to set up powerful Muslim interests against them. The culmination of this process was the 1935 Constitution. It created separate electorates and the outstanding Muslims politician of the early twentieth century, became the leader of the Muslims by the use of the communal ballot box, after being the most promising heir to Dadabhoy Naoroji and Gokhale. The vote based on education property and rent automatically disenfranchised the landless and already impoverished lower class Muslim, thus ensuring the feudal position and character of the Muslim representatives.

Communal Question

Thus the communal question, as we knew it, is something nurtured for years against "the rainy day", and today we find India and Pakistan real creations. Who has benefitted?

Gandhiji said "we shall settle the Hindu-Muslim problem as soon as the third party quits". It has not quit. Why should a third party quit making money out of our miseries? The British are the biggest foreign businessowners both in India and Pakistan today. After World War II, the presence of the Red Army forced a strategic re-deployment. This entailed concentration of troops as well as industrial regrowth in Europe. The increase of economic offtake from Asia by making Asians safeguard the economy of the West at Asian expense, served both the objectives in Europe very well. This in fact, is nothing more than a better economic readjustment. Here is the basic philosophy behind what is called neo-colonialism.

Having created India and Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia and

the Phillipines, separate Arab countries and Israel, and a scarcely viable chessboard of states in Africa, all the White Man wants to happen will happen. Tashkent followed by visits by Kosygin must be most disconcerting. On the other hand, communal trouble keeps our attention off the main issue of our plight; focussing it an internal distrust—just what is needed to keep the Indo-Pakistan, defence budgets in the vicinity of a nett Rupees fourteen thousand crores. A lot of what could have been spent on prosperity building inside has to be diverted; with a good chunk spent on obsolescent iron and steel ware, bought from European "friends".

Spurt in Prosperity

Just see the spurt in prosperity in European and American society between 1947 and 1967. It is due to the offtake of material at minimal rates from us and sale of finished goods at maximal rates to us. But so blind are we with fear and suspicion of each other that our only desire that is to outdo each other. It does not stop here either; beating Pakistan at hockey or cricket makes us feel giants *sans pareil* and the Pakistanis even put down their prayer mats and thank the Almighty for having helped them score an extra goal. No Muslim has represented India against Pakistan at hockey to date for sheer suspicion that he may let the team down.

This might sound stupid; but what single valid point was there in partition, and even less in keeping apart? So fragile is the existence of partition itself, that the only safe way to prevent us from getting together is to "hate". Once such an utterly stupid folly is embarked on, it follows that every Muslim is thought a Pakistani and every Hindu a prejudiced and bitter bigot. But whereas the latter could make some sense, how can the former? We were all originally born Indians east of the Hindukush, and any man who displays normal 20th century civilized outlook must realize that his birth right is where he is born. As we were all born

Indians and the term Pakistan is a historical invention, which even Mr Jinnah thought "a good rallying slogan", the sooner both sides come to their senses the better. In fact the last 75 years has been such a close integration of the systems, laws and standards of Burma, Ceylon, India and Pakistan that we are being nothing short of idiotic in not forming a super economic, social, diplomatic and communication region, so as to be able to stride rapidly, together into the future. The generations to come will certainly declare us as mentally and emotionally deficient. Educationally deficient we are too; and it is not at all certain if this deficiency has not been 'democratically' nurtured to limit mass imagination and through self-interestedness. The greatest "If" in history is what would have happened if Gandhiji had not been murdered and if Jinnah had lived. It is my firm belief that India and Pakistan would have come to a *modus vivendi*. This is clear from both their actions during the months of free life they enjoyed: Mr Jinnah pressed not to have his Bombay house confiscated and Gandhiji was about to go and live in the Punjab Salt Range district. His murder was the key to permanent estrangement between India and Pakistan. Godse was clearly the instrument and culminator of a foreign plan *in excelsis*.

Planned Chauvinism

Thus the situation we see today was deliberately created and has to be even more deliberately (a) exposed and (b) rooted out. The so-called communal riots are not riots at all. They should stop being called such. They are communal pogroms. So far as India is concerned (and for us Indians it is an immediate concern), in cities, well-defined Muslim 'ghettos' are being born. Their sizes are being accelerated by pogroms. Mass fury has gone out of the picture. The vast mass of Indians is not even roused to hunting Muslims. The new phase is systematic terrorisation and intimidation, with the greatest cruelty, so as to induce a sense of overpowering insecurity. Our main danger today is not chauvi-

nism gone hay-wire, it is selective and planned chauvinism of the stark fascist variety, with economic ostracism to divert forward and cohesive, national, social movement, on the Nazi pattern.

Other Perspectives

In other perspectives, there is a great deal of coming together; but the separation of the secular sheep from the revanchist goats is urgent. On the one hand the Head of State and the Chief Justice are Muslims. There is also, again a Muslim General in our army; on the other hand there is not even a Muslim clerk in most Central Ministries, and secret police reports strike at them with impunity. Only last year 1965, a lady translator and a young man were deprived of their livelihood in HAL Hyderabad, in spite of excellent work. No amount of protests raised the slightest bureaucratic response. The absence of Muslims in the police today is almost a disaster. During the terror in Rourkela in 1964 the town was in the hands of murderers and the police looked on. A senior Forest Officer was shooting Muslims hiding in the nearby jungle.

It is not only non-Muslims, one has to be protected from. It is shameful to think that communal Muslim politicians who gave the League shape and impetus, still receive considerable political deference and encouragement, because they have a following of Muslims. Thus the frustration among those who have no time for communal causerie becomes daily more bitter. Clear patterns, after twenty years of naked killing and being killed indicate that the communal virus is deliberately being kept alive.

The older generation deliberately distorts the young mind. Communalism is used less as a philosophy than as a weapon to better a group such as the RSS, or the position of an individual. There is no open opposition to the use of religion as a weapon of hate, such as articles in papers like *Mother India* and others. When there is mass murder no action is taken against the culprits. Not only this; when the Deputy Minister General

Shah Nawaz ordered criminal proceedings against men seen to have murdered, he was quietly transferred to another Ministry.

Basically, the question is not Hindu and Muslim; but the question of growing vested interests; of retention of neo-colonialism and its Indian allies. We the secular-minded can fight it by many means. Prominent among these means, is, ensuring proper twentieth-century education; but we have to take things as they exist also. We must see that steps are taken forthwith so that minorities do not grow frustrated. If there is to be scarcity let us share it as best we can. To build prosperity, No one community can go it alone. We have to do the job together.

Foundation For Prosperity

First, let us agree with our neighbours and lay the foundation for wide South Asian prosperity. Let us fight Fascist trends on every front, including the economic front, bring up those elements who lag behind, as a priority and suppress those elements who are callous to the common needs or who with the help of neo-colonial allies would wish to make India a personal utility. This is the only feasible long-term solution. For the short-term, it is important that life, liberty and the right to happiness are enjoyed by all. One way is to have an executive body armed with excersizable powers, a sort of standing tribunal of conglomerate nature, and broadly representative. In the final analysis it will depend on the conscience of the people who must abhor and resist such shameful acts.

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Regional Imbalances in Maharashtra

SUDAM DESHMUKH

MAHARASHTRA claims to be the most industrialised State of India. The official publication of the Government, *Maharashtra—An Economic Review*, 1967-68, proudly parades selected economic indicators to prove its claim of superiority vis-a-vis other States as shown in Table 1 (items 1 to 12) below.

Industrially, India is a poor nation. Nonetheless, all the 12 socio-economic indicators, as given below, demonstrate that Maharashtra is an industrially "developing" State and it occupies a pre-eminent position in the nation.

Hollowness of Claim

However, these figures are misleading. They wrongly show Maharashtra State as an industrially powerful and strong unit. In truth, large regions of this State are as poor and backward as any area of our country. The *Techno-economic survey* of Maharashtra, conducted by National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi (1963), tersely comments:

"These overall comparisons however are rather deceptive as they hide the fact that the favourable position of the state... is, in very large measure, due to the developments that have taken place in Bombay and its immediate vicinity... If Bombay is excluded from the comparison, the rest of the State seems to be as backward as other parts of the country... Ratnagiri, Satara, Sangli, Chanda, Kolaba and Marathwada Districts are especially poor. They have a very low level of urbanisation and none of them have much industrial activity." (*Survey*, Page 7).

The *Survey* went on to point out further:

"The unfavourable conditions over a major portion of the State are also revealed by the available data on the incidence of unemployment and under-

employment. Thus, notwithstanding the relatively high degree of overall urbanization and of the larger opportunities of non-agricultural employment, the proportion of the labour force, which is unemployed and under-employed does not appear to be appreciably lower than in the country as a whole." (*Ibid*).

The conclusive finding of the *Survey* held that:

"Except for literacy, the State compares unfavourably with the rest of India in respect of most of the other indicators (socio-economic). While the state has a higher percentage of literacy and a larger proportion of children at school, its health standards are no better than in the rest of India; the availability of medical facilities is poor and relative to population, as well as area, it has less roads than India as a whole." (*Ibid*)

In order to understand the industrial structures of under-developed regions of Maharashtra and especially of Vidarbha, it is necessary to find out the extent of concentration of industrial activity in and around Bombay.

Evil of Concentration

The phenomenon is not a mystery. Even the Government was appalled by its possible repercussions and as far back as in 1958, appointed a study group to consider the establishment of factories in Bombay and suggest dispersal of industries. By Government Resolution of March 14, 1958, the Bombay Government accepted the recommendations of this Study Group and announced that no new industrial unit would be allowed in Bombay area, and dispersal would be carried out by offering incentives to industries. The "Master Plan" of industrialisation of the then Bombay State of 1960, reiterated the same

TABLE

	% of urban population 1961	% of Workers to total population '61	Literacy % ('61)	Average Daily employment of factory workers, per thousand total population (1965)	Gross Output in industry per employed person (Rs.) 1965
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Maharashtra	28.2	47.9	29.4	22	Rs. 19243
India	18.0	42.9	24.0	10	Rs. 16126

policy.

The results however belie the Government intentions. Table 2 on next page would show the rise of a number of factories and of industrial labour in Greater Bombay alone in the last ten years:—

Even these figures are misleading. Mere number of factories does not fully bring out the enormity of economic and industrial concentration. When the adjoining districts of Thana and Poona are coupled with the area of Greater Bombay, the belt of Bombay-Poona shows a dangerous deep concentration of industries in the state of Maharashtra.

Let us take up official admission on the subject. Given in Table 3 on next page are the extracts from the Government publication of *Annual Plan, 1966-67, Part-I Outline*. It says:

“A feature of industrial development in the State is its concentration in and around Bombay and Poona, while the rest of the State is practically as backward as any other state.”

From the same Plan (1966-67), we give Table 4, on next page showing the productive capital, value of output and of the value added industrially:

On a review of the first three plans and on the eve of launching the still-born Fourth Plan, the same Outline narrated ruefully:

“Notwithstanding the establishment of rural industrial estates projects for dispersal of industry, there has been no significant achievements in this field so far.” (Page 5)

Shrinking Industry of Vidarbha

In the background of these basic facts, we have to consider the industrial structure of Vidarbha.

Before undertaking a survey of this region, it is necessary to remember that that this region gave birth to a widespread base of small and medium as well as some large industries, based on agricultural produces. In 1956, the base was in existence, although not formidable nor sufficiently self-generating. The question was to enlarge it, strengthen it and to help it gain momentum.

However, the decade since 1956 reveals very strange developments.

One after the other, the traditional agro-based industries of this region started closing down. The industrial centres disappeared from the map of the industries of Maharashtra; a large number of working

force in factories became non-existent and population of factory labour to the total population was greatly reduced. While in other parts of the country, the second and third five Year Plans brought extension and enlargement of industrial activity, the corresponding period brought industrial extinction and acute factory depression in Vidarbha. It is a greater misfortune that this phenomenon did not attract the attention of economists of national eminence and it did not get the requisite attention and publicity.

Some salient features of this deterioration are given in Table 4 on next page.

Figures compiled in this Table 4 are up to 1965. This was the year in which industrial activity achieved its zenith. Then came the national recession. As the Government publication concedes:

“Though the number of registered factories in the state increased marginally from 10,084 to 10,119 in 1966, there was a decline in the number of working factories which went down from 9,472 in 1965 to 9,042 in 1966. The fall in the average daily employment was also marked by 3% in 1966 over 1965.” (*Maharashtra—An Economic Review*, Page 15)

Thus, from 9,04,375 the number of factory workers in 1966 went down to 8,79,000. The fall since 1966 had been too prominent and although, the official figures are not available for 1967 & 68, it is common knowledge that the recession had started hitting the industries very badly. Naturally, the weaker section get worse jolts and it is obvious that industries of Vidarbha must have declined further after 1965. This explanation is necessary, since in all the compilations thereafter, the last figures are given only upto 1965.

Details of Deterioration

Let us first find the very broad features.

In the decade (from 1956 to 1965), the entire State of Maharashtra registered a growth of total 2,500 factories (in the break-up, Greater Bombay getting a net gain of 1,412 factories, followed by Thana: 427 and Poona: 233 factories). However, the region of Vidarbha *lost* 93 factories in the same period! The districtwise count is: Buldhana: 18, Akola 5, Yeotmal: 5, Wardha: 13, Bhandara: 52 (Total 93).

If the figures for factory labour for the same period is taken into consideration, the impact would be

1

	Value added per Rupee of productive capital (Rs.) 1965	Per capita consumption to total elec. (Kwh.) 66-67	% of ind. total consumpt. of elec. 66-67	Average population per Bank Office '66	Per capita Bank Credit of scheduled Banks 66	No of scholars in Primary & Secondary schools per 1000 Popu. nos 62-63	Per capita income at current prices 64-65
	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Maharashtra	0.41	106.7	70.4	25,000	174.1	140	524
India	0.28	54.1	71.2	50,000	50.0	119	422

more realistic. In this decade, Maharashtra recruited a new factory labour force of 2,17,231 (as net gain, after deducting the labour losses). Once again, the gain is shared to the maximum by Greater Bombay (1,42,780), followed by Thana (38,792) and Poona (31,910). And once again Vidarbha loses its factory labour force by 17,413. The break-up districtwise is: Buldhana-2,144; Akola-2,366; Yeotmal-N A.; Wardha-1,820; Nagpur-2,622; Bhandara 8,461.

The rot had started immediately after 1956. Detailed statistics are only available for the period of 1956-61 and reliance shall have to be put on these figures to understand the trend. The districtwise

figures are compiled below. (The source is Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Jan-March 1966).

Was there a wide phenomenon of industrial fall during these five years? No. The figures of Maharashtra, when juxtaposed with Vidarbha will show the results. During these five years Maharashtra gained 284 large-scale factories, 973 small-scale factories (Total gain of 1,257) and the corresponding figures for labour are—gains in large-scale factories 81,261; and in Small-scale 18,976; and total labour gain of 1,00,237.

The figure of "total registered factories" thus could be very misleading. As is known, there was a

TABLE 2

Total no. of regd. factories			Total no. of factory workers			
1956	1961	1965	1956	1961	1965	
3,223	4,064	4,635	415863	429667	572447	Gr. Bombay
6,976	8,233	9,476	625062	687142	904375	All Maharash.

TABLE 3

(1) District	(2)		(3) Percentages		(4)
	Productive Capital		Gross Output		Value added
Gr. Bombay	69.6		74.0		78.0
Thana	7.67		5.09		4.84
Poona	5.36		3.84		3.47
Ahmednagar	2.57		2.18		1.75
Sholapur	1.66		2.26		2.14
Nagpur	2.31		2.29		1.88
All Other Districts	11.13		10.73		7.49
	100		100		100

TABLE 4
FACTORIES AND FACTORY LABOUR IN VIDARBHA

Item	1956	1961	1965
Total No. of rgtd. working factories—			
—Vidarbha	922	863	939
—All Maharashtra	6,976	8,233	9,476
Factory Workers			
—Vidarbha	83,323	70,435	68,199
—All Maharashtra	6,25,062	6,87,142	9,04,375
Average no. of workers per factory			
—Vidarbha	92	82	72
—All Maharashtra	99	96	N.A.
Factory Workers per Lac. of Population			
—Vidarbha	1,005	763	593
—All Maharashtra	1,937	1,991	N.A.

(Source: Bureau of Economics & Statistics, Govt. of Maharashtra)

TABLE 5
Decrease in number of factories & Labour in Vidarbha
(Each District, over 1956—1961)

District	Registered working factories (Loss)			Loss in Factory Workers		
	Large Scale	Small Scale	Total Loss	Large Scale	Small Scale	Total Labour Loss
Buldhana	25	5	30	1,354	154	1,508
Akola	18	19*	1*	1,829	210	1,619
Amravati	11	5*	6	1,379	44*	1,335
Wardha	6	6	12	108	128	236
Yeotmal	19	1*	18	525	46	571
Nagpur	9	54*	45*	1,070	461*	609
Bhandara	26	11	37	5,413	1,902	7,315
Chanda	1*	3	2	392*	87	305*
Total	113	54*	59	11,286	1,602	12,888

*Indicates a gain

big spurt of "small-scale" industries throughout the country, following the policy of the Government in granting innumerable concessions etc. to this sector. This resulted in the mushrooming of such small units all over the country; and although its repercussions in Vidarbha were very feeble, nonetheless it did result here in the opening of several small-scale units (resulting in a gain of 54 small-scale factories). But, the poverty of such units and their ineffectiveness is self-evident. The gain of 54 factories is counterbalanced by a fall of 1,062 labour force in the small-sector itself. The impact of the disappearance of 113 large-scale factories in this period of five years (with 11,286 labour force with it) can be very easily imagined.

That Vidarbha alone suffered seriously on the industrial front would be further evident from the following comparative figures of industrial activities, of other regions of Maharashtra for the corresponding period (1956-61) :

Region	Factories				Total	
	Large		Small			
Greater Bombay	Gain	295	546	Gain	841	Gain
Bombay Division	Gain	317	988	Gain	1,305	Gain
Poona Division	Gain	82	122	Loss	40	Loss
Aurangabad	Loss	2	53	Gain	51	Gain
Vidarbha	Loss	113	54	Gain	59	Loss

Before finding out the precise nature of Vidarbha industries and the extent of their decay, it is pertinent here to record that the number of organised labour, working in registered factories is getting thinner in this region. No doubt industrial labour did not constitute major force in Vidarbha but at the same time, its percentage to total working population of the area was not inconsequential. Had there been a rise in industrial activity, this force could have been expand-

ed. But, its ratio is contracting.

In Vidarbha, the percentage of factory labour to total workers was 12 per cent in large scale, 12.77 in small-scale and 12.13 in total in 1956. In 1961, it came down to 8.77 per cent, 9.80 per cent and 8.95 per cent respectively. Even in the district of Nagpur, its influence has come down from 4.65 per cent to 3.97 per cent in just five years. Obviously, the percentage since 1961 must have been on the decline, as we have already seen in the previous Tables.

Wholesale Annihilation of Agro-Industries of Vidarbha

The decade of industrial decay of Vidarbha is characterised by weakening and at times, complete liquidation of traditional agro-based industries of Vidarbha. In order to find out the district and individual centre's situation, a very detailed and elaborate study shall have to be undertaken (and in the interest of correct economic study, such a study can be ignored and neglected), but a few observations

can be made on the general trend of decline and decay.

Vidarbha offers cotton, groundnut, edible oil seeds, rice and tobacco (Bidi) for the primary agro-industrial processing. Forest-based industries are too weak to be taken into account, while the vast wealth of minerals is not tapped industrially on a big scale. Thus, the principal industries were—cotton ginning and pressing, cotton textiles, oil mills, rice and dal

mills, tobacco manufacturing and in and around Nagpur/Chanda, timber saw mills. The other industries are non-viable units of little significance and do not alter the general picture. We will now try to assess the extent of decay in each and every industry as well as the effect on each Vidarbha district.

The decade (1956-65) closed down a total of 150 cotton ginning/pressing factories of Maharashtra (110 in large scale and 40 in small scale). The worst sufferer was Vidarbha. (The State lost 11 industrial centres completely, which were engaged in this in-

dustry). The Vidarbha districts loss is given below: downgraded. Its factories closed down, labour force was considerably reduced and there was no opening of industrial employment opportunities. That the so-called "running" industrial units were also facing crisis—threatening extinction—is a different matter and also needs careful investigation to find out the economic conditions of the "running" industries.

Table 6 on next page indicates the situation relating to principal agro-based industries of Vidarbha (excluding textiles for obvious reasons). At least, in this category, there are prospects of growth and ex-

Gin-Press	Buldhana	Loss	20 factories	2,172 labour	force
	Akola	"	16	1,254	"
	Amravati	"	9	N.A.	"
	Yeotmal	"	15	N.A.	"
	Wardha	"	12	715	"
	Nagpur	"	6	286	"

Total Vidarbha

Loss of 78 Factories

The second most significant agro-industry in decay has been *gur* but it was never an organised industry in this region and is therefore not considered here.

Then comes *Textiles*. Its crisis is too deep for words, too national for a regional consideration and too complex for a brief examination. However, the sickness of Vidarbha Textile Mills had been prolonged and almost all the running mills are suffering from one ailment or the other. The closures are recent history and need not be repeated here.

The first five years (upto 1961), saw a closure of 11 large-scale mills in Maharashtra, with a share of three mills in Vidarbha. Since then the spread of power looms has changed the statistical data (giving the whole state a net gain 105 units upto 1965) but Vidarbha had continued to show a fall with closure of five mills. Given below is a consolidated statement of all the eight Vidarbha districts for the decade.

This table needs very close scrutiny. It will show that one after another, every Vidarbha district was

pansion in this region. Facts however speak otherwise.

These figures also reveal that the positions of prominence, which Vidarbha used to occupy in the industrial community of Maharashtra State had steadily declined in the last decade. No longer it commands its superiority in selected agriculture-based industries. In fact, it is showing a very steep industrial decline and its share in the total State industries is getting smaller and smaller.

Inevitable Consequences

These statistics can be further elaborated. For example, it is possible to have a detailed break-up of each and every district, to sort out individual industrial centres and then to observe the composition of industries as well as the labour employed in the last decade. May be, such a study would soon be needed to elaborate the theme. But figures presented here are sufficient to hold the following crucial conclusions valid and true:

District	1956				1961				1965	
	L/s	S/S	Total	Labour						
	Factories			Force	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(3)	(4)
Buldhana	59	26	85	6,673	34	21	55	5,165	61	4,529
Akola	49	35	84	8,598	31	57	85	6,979	69	6,232
Amraoti	47	36	83	8,214	36	41	77	6,869	89	8,246
Yeotmal	43	33	76	5,043	24	34	58	4,472	71	5,593
Wardha	24	28	52	7,652	18	22	40	7,416	39	5,832
Nagpur	66	218	284	31,907	57	272	319	31,298	394	29,285
Bhandara	37	181	218	12,986	11	170	181	5,671	166	4,525
Chanda	7	33	40	2,250	8	30	38	2,555	50	3,957
Total	332	590	922	83,323	219	644	863	70,435	939	62,367

TABLE 6

Industry		1956		1961		1965	
		Factory	Labour	Factory	Labour	Factory	Labour
Cotton Gin-Press	—M—	604	41,501	454	38,053	454	34,146
	—V—	277	22,245	177	17,929	183	19,379
Rice-Dal Mills	—M—	180	2,565	213	2,918	N.A.	N.A.
	—V—	95	1,107	119	1,386	N.A.	N.A.
Flour Mills	—M—	18	1,096	30	1,683	N.A.	N.A.
	—V—	1	33	3	63	N.A.	N.A.
Oil Mills	—M—	278	10,998	296	9,609	321	10,828
	—V—	48	2,404	51	1,861	45	1,825
Hydrogenated Oil	—M—	9	2,422	8	3,746	N.A.	N.A.
	—V—	2	375	2	375	N.A.	N.A.
Tobacco Mfg.	—M—	427	39,735	400	34,845	415	34,025
	—V—	168	18,455	108	9,889	87	5,997
Vidarbha Total		591	44,619	460	31,503	N.A.	N.A.
All Other Indust.	—V—	321	38,713	403	38,932	N.A.	N.A.
Grand Total of all Industries	—V—	912	83,323	863	70,435	939	62,367

(a) The inter-dependence of agriculture and agro-industries had been classically shown in Vidarbha. Agricultural productivity has gone down here with the result that Vidarbha agricultural yields are the lowest in the country. This, in its turn, has affected the industries (which were only agriculture-based here), considerably. The crisis of agriculture here is directly linked up with the decay in industry and vice-versa.

(b) In view of the considerable decline on traditional industrial structure, there had been no advance in new sectors of industrial enterprises. There has been no large-scale or remunerative small-scale industrial activity in spheres other than agro-based ones.

(c) The rapid decay has completely emasculated agriculture and paralysed industry. The socio-economic structure is therefore undergoing very rapid deterioration, resulting in growing under and unemployment amongst rural and urban populations and large-scale unemployment amongst the educated. Technically educated persons are migrating *enmasse* to the metropolitan centres in search of employment.

(d) The deep frustration has embittered the people, and narrow "regionalism" raises its head whenever some opportunity is provided. Intellectuals are baffled, and it becomes easy to convince them that a separate Vidarbha State could have resulted in the prosperity of agriculture and industry and consequently of the entire social economy.

Imbalances, Regionalism and Democracy

One of the most instructive lessons of the technological revolution (which engulfed the world after the Second World War) is the over-concentration of industries and the over-centralisation of metropolises in every country. The phenomenon is explainable.

So are its consequences. But explanations do not help. The results of such over-centralisation are devastating. The metropolis grows, out of all proportions, in this era, by devouring the hinterland, by crippling the adjoining regions and "colonising" the neighbouring areas. Capital and technique, skill and managerial talent, technical personnel and raw commodities—all rush to such rising metropolis, deserting the once stable and growing centres of dispersed industrial areas. Thus, the sky-rocketing of modern metropolis takes place on the crumbling edifice of old industrial areas and centres. This has happened in all the developed countries after 1948. This has been happening in India. This has happened in Maharashtra.

Indian planning has soon shown that it is not enough to merely point out the regional imbalances and to strive to correct it. In 20 years of planning, regional imbalances have risen to immense proportions. And in days to come, they will further grow, decapitating the under-developed regions even more swiftly and severely. The present policy of the rulers offer no succour to these regions. If left to their own fate, the industrial structures in these regions, would be reduced to bare primary processing units with all 'manufacturing' transferred to the metropolis. It is not for nothing that the new approach for the Fourth Five Year Plan has started giving "greater stress" on correcting the regional imbalances.

What has happened to the industries of Vidarbha, will, more or less, happen to the industrial infants of other Indian regions. However, the tragedy of Vidarbha is more poignant since the industries in this region had started taking roots and were on the verge of growing and becoming self-generating when the "technological" revolution of a unified Mahara-

ashtra started strangulating it.

What, however, is lost sight of in such discussions is the basic fact that *non-dispersal of industries is the denial of democracy*. Over-centralisation and over-concentration are apparent enemies of democracy. Only dispersal of "property" (which here only could mean industry), can grant a lease of life to democracy; and therefore, to fight for the dispersal of industries for all the under-developed regions is the true fight for democracy and the democratic people of metropolis like Bombay, Calcutta, etc. should be the first to come out staunchly for dispersal of industries and for demolishing regional economic imbalances.

Some of the major developed countries have faced this situation rather bravely and not unsatisfactorily. For example, in the UK, the main plank of the labour Government (from 1954 onwards) was on compulsory "regional planning". Legislation was applied to enforce dispersal of industries and very liberal incentives were offered and at times—almost forcibly induced, for the establishment of all new industries only in such undeveloped regions. Migrations were stopped of capital and technique and employments were gainfully provided at these places. Heavy investments and huge expenditures were repeatedly incurred to loosen the hold of growing metropolis and only after such efforts, notable advances were recorded in the development of such

under-developed regions. Once the wheel of advance rotated spontaneously (induced by these external and internal endeavours) at these regions, it was not difficult to anticipate automatic growth of industrialisation.

Similar and somewhat more drastic actions are called for in India. Unfortunately the Government of India does not appear to be serious to implement its tall talk about "dispersal of industries". Recently, Sri Fakhruddin Ahmed said at Nagpur on July 13 1968 that growth of industries in backward regions can never be allowed at the cost of Bombay or other advanced centres. This negates all the professed policies of the Government.

Demand for 'separatism' is only a manifestation of deep frustration which is nowhere more evident than in the case of the decay of industry and deterioration of agriculture of Vidarbha. The progressive forces of the region cannot allow things to drift. A separate Vidarbha does not solve the problems of its agriculture and industry. The demand is misguided. However, what is needed is a resolute campaign of the people for guaranteed dispersal of industries, for planned development of regions and for rapid industrialisation—along with and simultaneously with the progress of agriculture. Only such a step would result in real extension of democracy and economic prosperity of the people.

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China at the Cross-Roads

BURLATISKI

Two years after the official proclamation of the "Cultural Revolution" in China, discussions of its immediate purposes are now being increasingly relegated to the background.

Many fundamental questions concerning the present and future of the country are being raised. Among them, undoubtedly, is the question of the nature of China's social structure, of the trend of her deformation as a result of the "Cultural Revolution" and the "seizure of power" by the Mao Tse-tung group. Without claiming to provide to any exhaustive reply, we shall touch only upon some aspects of this problem.

In recent years several fundamental opinions on the nature of China's social and political order have been expressed in Marxist literature.

1. China is a socialist country, and the anti-socialist elements in her policy are an accidental feature, linked only with the Mao personality cult and its high-handedness. This view, however, meet with the following objection: the non-socialist elements in China's policy have been a stable factor for many (over ten) years already. Inside the country this policy found expression in the "Great Leap Forward", the "People's Communes", and the "Cultural Revolution"; outside the country—in anti-Sovietism, an attempt to split the unity of the world Communist movement, an extremist foreign-policy line, especially in Asia.

2. China is a country following a non-capitalist road. This view, however, is refuted, firstly, by the implementation of social transformations in China which are out of question in countries following a non-capitalist road: state property prevailed in town and co-operative in the countryside, and these achievements still stand firm. Secondly, for a long period the liberation struggle in China has been headed by the Communist Party, proclaiming Marxism-Leninism as its ideology. It is significant that even the Mao Tse-tung group; in outward appearance, has had to cover up its campaign against the Communist Party of China and Marxism with slogans of defence of socialism.

3. China is passing through one of the initial

stages along the road to socialism with all consequent difficulties and contradictions, aggravated by the country's economic and political backwardness and, particularly, by the regime of Mao Tse-tung's personal power, which is implanting the ideology and practice of peasant petty-bourgeois socialism and nationalism. But, then a number of problems are raised: just what stage is China passing through? How can we define the economic, social and political order in China? And so on, and so forth.

I

Specific Difficulties

It is hardly necessary to dwell on the tremendous difficulties the Communists and all the Chinese people encountered on the road to socialism. On the eve of the victory of the revolution, the rural population of China was almost 90 percent of the total. The landlords and rich peasants (accounting for about 10 percent of the population of the countryside), of course, little resembled the landlords and kulaks of Russia, and even less, the big capitalist latifundistas and farmers, for their level of labour productivity scope and efficiency of production.

Specific semi-feudal relations prevailed in agricultural production. On the eve of the revolution, landlords and rich peasants owned almost three quarters of the cultivated land. They leased a large proportion of the land to landless and land-hungry peasants on shackling terms. About 70 percent of the peasants were poor and some 20 percent were middle peasants; from 60 to 70 percent of the peasants were leaseholders or semi-leaseholders.

The social structure of the town also appeared very backward. Unskilled workers and coolie accounted for over half of the total; industrial workers were in an insignificant minority. Hence, China had not such a developed industrial proletariat as Russia had on the eve of the October Revolution. Nor was there a significant number of scientists and technicians.

After the victory of the revolution, the Chinese people had to effect a fundamental reorganization of the national economy: to carry out land reform, to solve the food problem, and to set about the industrialization of the country.

This article appeared in the Soviet journal, Mirovaya Ekonomika in Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya, No. 6, 1968.

The difficulties of economic development were aggravated by the rapid increase in the population which outstripped the growth of production. Between 1949 and 1960, the population of the country, according to Chinese figures increased from 542 million to 682 million; that is, by 140 million.

In the drive for industrialization China, at the same time, also had important advantages, as compared with the corresponding period in the USSR. This was the possibility of relying on economic assistance from the USSR and other socialist countries, of applying their advanced scientific and technological achievements and experience of social transformations. Lastly, the People's Republic of China launched industrialization in a far more favourable international situation. Thanks to the new balance of power in the world arena, relying on mighty Soviet support, China had an opportunity of systematically advancing along the road of economic and social progress in a comparatively peaceful international situation, without spending excessive resources on defence. It is clear that the programme of industrialization and building the foundations of socialism could be planned for a comparatively long period.

We have cited these figures—inevitably incomplete and scrappy—for the only purpose of illustrating the tremendous specific difficulties, which confronted the country after the victory of the people's revolution. It was a question of creating the necessary economic and social preconditions for socialist construction and, above all, a solution to the agrarian problem and industrialization.

Land Reform

Land reform was one of the first measures taken by people's power. The solution of the agrarian problem was indeed an epoch-making event for the Chinese peasantry. The reform absolutely liquidated the system by which land was owned by landlords, who ceased to exist as a class. The peasants received land, and farm production began stepping up.

The state sector in the economy was rapidly expanding from the first years of people's power. To begin with, it included nationalized enterprises of bureaucratic capital, and also private enterprises of the comprador bourgeoisie and foreign monopolies. The state concentrated in its hands banks, railways, air, sea and motor transport, telegraph communications, heavy and light industry. As early as 1952, the state had assumed a dominating position in industry and trade.

Big progress was made in a brief period. Agricultural production went up by about 50 percent and industrial output more than doubled. Irrigation facilities, which are of tremendous importance for the country's agriculture, were rehabilitated or built anew.

The policy of the Communist Party of China rested on stimulating the advance of all sectors of the national economy with the object of strengthening the economy, solving the problems of industrialization. At that time the state encouraged not only the development of small-goods production, but

also of the private capitalist and state-capitalist sectors, with intensification of the role of the state sector as a reliable guarantee for the strengthening of the national economy and its development in a socialist direction.

This economic course was supplemented by a flexible political line. The ideas of the People's Democratic Dictatorship, advanced long before the victory of the revolution, found a concrete expression in the specific forms of state power, which took into consideration the original conditions of the Chinese revolution, the experience of democratic transformations in earlier liberated regions of the country, the necessity of a united front of all progressive forces of China in the struggle for the victory of the revolution.

II

Struggle of Trends in Economic and Social Policy

It is generally accepted that the Communist Party of China achieved big successes in economic and social development between 1952 and 1957. On balance, this is really true. The lines, worked out after 1952 and designed for a transitional period, reflected the matured demands of socialist construction in China and rested on the principles of scientific Communism. However, a thorough study of documents of that time shows that a grim struggle was already developing between realistically-minded leaders and the exponents of a petty-bourgeois nationalistic line, with the policy meeting China's objective conditions prevailing at that time.

The most striking event in the life of the Party and the entire country was the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of China in 1956. This Congress can rightly be regarded as the culmination point, the highest achievement of the Chinese Communists in their effort for the socialist transformation of the country. At the same time, re-reading the Political Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and looking at it through the prism of subsequent developments, we cannot help noting to a series of essential factors which undoubtedly reflected a latent struggle inside the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

The first section of the Report of the CPC Central Committee already warns against mistakes of Right and Left deviations. It bluntly says that such mistakes have been made by the CPC for many years. The Right deviation lies in satisfaction with the achievements of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, in the demand to halt the revolution, in the refusal to admit the necessity of its development into a socialist revolution, in the unwillingness to carry through a policy of restricting capitalism in town and countryside. As regards Left deviation from the General Line, it lies mainly in the demand to build socialism "in one fine day", in the refusal to admit that the transition to socialism must be gradual, in the lack of faith that China can peacefully attain the aims of socialism. The Report criticized both deviations, but Liu Shao-chi, who presented the Report, very often and most eagerly repeated

criticism of the so-called Left deviation. This emphasis was all the more significant since Mao Tse-tung in 1955, had, in essence, contradicted the General Line by demanding faster development of producers' co-operatives of peasants and declaring the opponents of voluntary methods to be "agents of the bourgeoisie."

Judging by all the pointers, the pace of co-operation of peasants was not the only topic of discussion in that period. Another disputed issue was socialist industrialization of the country, its deadlines and the ways of implementation. A Report, delivered at the Congress by Chou En-lai, reflects the struggle around this problem. Here, for instance, we meet the following serious warning to the opponents of the Line, which prevailed at the Eighth Congress of the CPC: "Also mistaken is another view—attempts to effect construction alone, divorced from the outside world. It goes without saying that assistance from the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies will still be needed for a long period to build an integral industrial system in our country...". As a result of struggle, a programme for the further development of the national economy was adopted, envisaging an increase of about 100 percent in gross industrial output for 1962 as compared with 1957, and a rise of some 35 percent in gross agricultural production.

Highly Significant Changes

Signs of serious struggle are also evident on the questions of inner-party democracy, which found an expression in the main reports, in the speeches of many delegates and in the resolutions passed by the Congress. Highly significant were the changes introduced at the Congress to the wording of the Rules of the CPC concerning the ideological foundations of the Party. Whereas the Seventh Congress of the Party had recorded the thesis that the "Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung" are the theoretical foundation of the Party, this provision was deleted in the new Rules, adopted at the Eighth Congress of the CPC, which read: "The Communist Party of China is guided in its activity by Marxism-Leninism. Marxism-Leninism alone correctly explains the laws governing the development of society, correctly indicates the ways of building socialism and communism." The Eighth Congress of the CPC stressed the necessity of strictly observing the deadlines for convening Congresses, plenary sessions of the Central Committee, the principles of collective leadership of the Party, opposed the personality cult and arbitrariness.

The conclusion can be drawn from these and other facts that a grim struggle on some major political issues was already under way at the Eighth Congress of the CPC. However, soon after the Congress, the extremists launched a feverish campaign for a revision of its decisions. The second session of the Eighth Congress of the CPC was held in May 1958. By that time an actual beginning had already been made in pursuing the line of the "Great Leap Forward" and of the "People's Communes". All the session had to do was to record the new "General Line", though there they did not yet risk to adopt a decision on massive "communization".

This was done only after the end of the session, in the summer of 1958 at the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, where Mao Tse-tung's associates imposed their decision on the setting up of "People's Communes". By that time, over 350 million peasants had already been subjected to forcible "communization". A month later, at the end of September of the same year, 98.2 percent of the rural population had already been drawn into "Communes". Mao Tse-tung once again displayed his utter disregard for the decisions of the Party Congress, the view of the members of the Central Committee of the CPC, who were confronted with an accomplished fact.

The essence of Mao Tse-tung's "new course" was subsequently formulated as follows: "Stubbornly to fight for three years and to effect changes in the main appearance of most districts of the country". On the basis of this line, the former targets of the economic development plan were declared to be "conservative", and the supporters of observance of these decisions were called "routiners" and "Right opportunists". The new line of economic development envisaged: to increase gross industrial output during the five years not 100 percent but 540 percent; to fulfil the 12-year programme in agriculture in three years and to raise gross agricultural production not 35 percent but 150 percent. Steel production, for instance, was to increase from 5.3 million to 80-100 million tons during the five years.

There is no need to dwell on the results of the "Great Leap Forward" and the "People's Communes": they are well-known. Suffice it to say that industrial and agricultural output in 1962 was even below the 1957 level. Of course, the elemental calamities in China during this period seriously damaged the economy. But no matter how hard they tried, the present Chinese leaders cannot conceal that they, and they alone, bear the responsibility for the economic damage caused by their adventuristic experiments.

Ugly Effect of Policy

The economic gamble of the Maoists left a deep scar on the social psychology of the whole of China. The failure of this experiment and the subsequent disappointments in the long run had an ugly effect on the present policy of Chinese leadership.

The Ninth plenary session of the CPC Central Committee (January 1961), which adopted the course of the so-called "readjustment", acknowledged that serious economic and political difficulties had arisen in the country. The scope of capital construction was sharply reduced, most building projects were mothballed. Reorganization of "People's Communes" began and their plots of land for private use were returned to the peasants. Chinese propaganda still speaks of "People's Communes", but in fact producers' cooperatives, with some divergences, have been restored in the countryside.

The obvious failure of the policy of the "Great Leap Forward" and of the "People's Communes" enabled the opponents of the extremist line to avenge their defeat. An extensive resolution "On Some Questions related to People's Communes" was al-

ready adopted late in 1958 at the Sixth plenary session of the CPC Central Committee in Wuchang. In outward appearance, this resolution proclaimed all-out victories, as usual with the CPC, where emphasis is laid on saving "face"; but all its content was directed against running ahead, criticized people who were "overzealous", who were thinking that to build Communism was "not at all difficult". This Resolution described as "utopians" those who insisted on "an erroneous line of thought" on questions of material stimulation—wages, prices and money. The Resolution spoke of a gradual transition to Communism, and said that the process of establishing "People's Communes" would take at least 15-20 years.

The Resolution "On Control of Work to Normalize the Activity of People's Communes in Rural Districts", adopted by the Seventh plenary session of the CPC Central Committee (April 1959), was even more categorical on these problems. And, lastly, the Eighth plenary session of the CPC Central Committee in Lushan (August 1959) recorded the virtual repudiation of "communization". The plenary session resolved that the "People's Communes" should "transfer their property to production teams" and be reorganized actually along co-operative lines.

We have no exact information about the situation inside the CPC Central Committee during the revision of the policy of the "Great Leap Forward" and the "People's Communes", and the transition to the line of "readjustment". But all the data indicate that the struggle was grim.

It follows from documents published in the Chinese press of late that Mao and his course were bluntly criticized at the Eighth plenary session of the CPC Central Committee in Lushan by prominent leaders of the People's Republic of China: Marshal Peng Te-huai, member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and ex-Defence Minister of the Republic; Chang Wen-tien, alternate member

of the Political Bureau and Deputy Foreign Minister, and others. It is reported that Peng Te-huai read out an extensive statement at the Lushan plenary session, analyzing the shortcomings of the "Great Leap Forward" and the "People's Communes."

Though the line of the opponents of extremism prevailed, on balance, at the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth plenary sessions of the CPC Central Committee, the Mao-Tse-tung group was able to wreak vengeance on its most zealous opponents. Marshal Peng Te-huai was dismissed from his post, Chen Yun was removed from guidance of the economy, and others, who had taken part in the open struggle, were also victimized. True, Mao Tse-tung also had to manoeuvre: he resigned as Chairman of the People's Republic of China and resolved, as he declared, "to dedicate himself to theoretical research".

However, the triumph of the exponents of a more realistic course was short-lived. The pursuit of the policy of "readjustment" made it possible to rectify somewhat the disastrous economic situation. Mao Tse-tung and his supporters immediately took advantage of the beginning of stabilization to resume their attacks. A campaign was launched under the slogans "learn from the People's Liberation Army" (an attempt to militarize Party and state affairs) and "unfold socialist education" (indoctrination of Mao Tse-tung's Thoughts in all spheres of ideological work).

The sharp turn in the policy of the Chinese leadership in relations with the other socialist countries and Communist Parties dates back to about the same time. A striking symptom of this turn was the publication in Peking of the notorious book "Long Live Leninism!" This was the first attempt of the Maoists openly to give battle to the world Communist movement on fundamental questions of its strategy and tactics.

(To be Continued Next Week)

New Dimension to Freedom Struggle in S. Africa

RAMESH JAURA

As the armed struggle launched by freedom fighters of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa and the Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union completes one year on August 13, a new dimension has been recently added to the situation in Vorster's apartheid regime.

This is indicated by the distribution of leaflets all over South Africa by the ANC, South African Indian Congress and the South African Coloured Peoples Congress. The latter two are partners in the Congress movement in South Africa, whose underground machinery distributed the three leaflets

to mobilise support for the liberation struggle.

The ANC leaflet is addressed to White South Africans, and seeks to pinpoint its opposition to the recently introduced Urban Bantu Councils. It states that these Councils will not fight for higher wages and better living

conditions because they have no such powers. "The rich must remain rich, and the poor must remain poor. The destruction of trade unions and political organisations, leaves the black workers completely helpless".

Another point mentioned is that the Urban Councils will not solve the problem of overcrowding in "our trains, buses, nor will they stop police raids for passes, poll tax, and residential permits". Nor would they stop the arrest of Africans and their prosecution for inability to pay rent, without bothering to get them houses if the location superintendent ejects them from the present houses. "It is the whites' Sacred Right to own a home in our fatherland. As far as you are concerned we are your cheap labour, but no citizens."

The leaflet, then, reiterates the ANC stand that no constitutional procedure will throw the Nationalist fascists' government out of office. "The White electorate must remember that the Nationalist policies have now led to an intensification of the inevitable conflict between Black and White races. The truth is that we shall now meet in the battlefield. We shall fight to the last drop of our blood to realise our aspirations...The blood of the Black people...will not go unrevengeed."

There should be no misunderstanding that the Africans are after the blood of White South Africans. What they fight for is freedom of accommodation; movement from one part of the country to another, and the right to express through public platforms within the country what they think of the apartheid regime. But even the human rights enshrined in the UN Charter are denied to them by the racist rulers of South Africa who pay no heed to international opinion and defy norms which civilization has come to accept.

The Africans are not alone in demanding these rights, and seeking now through armed struggle liberation of the land which belongs to them. The politically organised Indians and Coloured People (persons of mixed origin) are one with

the African National Congress in wresting freedom. In a leaflet distributed among South Africans of Indian origin, Dr Y.M. Dadoo, exiled President of the barred South African Indian Congress states: "Our community, like the African and Coloured People, has had enough of racial discrimination apartheid and White supremacy". The Group Areas Act is taking a heavy toll; daily more and more families are being driven out from their hearth and home and thrown into the garbage heap of Indian group areas. The people of Indian origin are not only being robbed of their means of livelihood; the standard of education of children is being lowered.

Dr Dadoo says: "Unemployment is rife. Once the Government succeeds in completely driving our people into ghettos, all kinds of restrictions will be applied preventing our people from going out of the areas to seek work, carry out professional duties or to trade; prevent non-Indians from coming into our areas without permission". He warns: "We shall be cooped up in a lot of hovels; cut off from the mainstream of the life, economy and culture of the country".

Significant Warning

This warning is significant because the South African Indians have "resolutely and bravely offered resistance to racial discrimination and segregation from the days of Gandhi, who conducted the campaigns of passive resistance and the Great March. Then came the 1946 Passive Resistance Campaign against the Ghetto Act which prepared the ground for the Indians to March hand-in-hand with the African people under the leadership of ANC, since the advent of Nationalist Government in 1948. The Indians also participated in the stay-at-homes, hartals, the Defence Campaign of 1952. At the Congress of the People in 1955, the Indians participated. It was this Congress which formulated the historic Freedom charter which guarantees "free-

dom and democracy to all South Africans".

The militant Indian youth responded to the call of the military wing of the Congress movement, Umkhonto we Sizwe, Babla Saloojee sacrificed his life; and many of the brave activists like Billy Nair, Chibba Maharaj, Indres Naidoo, Shirish Nanabhai, Reggie Vandeyar, George Naicker, Ebrahim Ismail, together with their African, Coloured and White comrades-in-arms, have been serving long terms of imprisonment. Ahmed Kathrada, together with the outstanding leaders Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Abram Fischer, Govan Mbeki, Denis Goldberg and others is condemned to life imprisonment. Nana Sita and Mohamed Bhana along with other students who refused to participate in the Republic celebrations have sacrificed their lives.

Dr Dadoo then goes on to spell out the part in the new phase of the struggle against apartheid, which the Indians should play. The foremost thing to do is "ally yourselves with the freedom fighters—help them in every possible way". And, more specifically, make their path easy. This call to the Indian community is significant as the apartheid regime has set up a puppet organisation called the South African Indian Council. While the Indian community in general could intensify its resistance against the Group Areas Act and other forms of apartheid, the youth have a particular role to play. Their place is in the forefront of the freedom struggle, to become freedom fighters carry this message wide among the community and help mobilise support for the African guerrillas in town and country.

The appeal of Coloured Peoples Congress to the coloured community numbering about 1,800,000 the majority of whom live in the South Western Cape with Capé Town as its centre, lies in that the apartheid regime has alienated itself. Instead of the community being allowed to take part in building a new and better South Africa, as the leaflet says, its position has become

worse and worse. There was a time when the coloured people were treated a little better than the enslaved African. But today the community cannot elect its own representatives to South African Parliament, which prefers the pro-Government "representatives" and the Council for Coloured Affairs.

According to CPC Secretary-General Reggie September, "the position of 'half brother', in the relation between the White and coloured man of the Cape, has been rejected by the White man

in no uncertain terms during the course of last 20 years". In an interview to the July issue of *Sechaba*, official organ of the ANC, Reggie said, "the Nationalists have imposed on us a system of complete social, cultural, educational, residential and political segregation".

Commenting on the guerilla struggle, Reggie said, it is being watched with keen anxiety by "all responsible elements in the Community." They hope that each battle will mean a shattering defeat for the forces of Smith

and Vorster. They recognise this as the beginnings for the real struggle for freedom, and they are proud when they hear the youngmen from our community are also part of this force.

The CPC leaflet thus gives the call for the coloured people to fight for a free South Africa together with the African freedom fighters. There would be many hard battles ahead, it says, but the struggle is essential for wresting South Africa from the White minority which continues to pursue racist policies.

Discussion

Palme Dutt on France

Mainstream has carried commentaries on the French developments, by Mohit Sen (June 29 and July 13), Lajpat Rai (July 6 and August 10) and Observer (July 27). The following comments in Labour Monthly, July 1968 by the distinguished British Marxist, R. Palme Dutt, will be of interest to Mainstream readers. —Editor

ONCE again the Gallic cock has led the way. All the illusions of the quiescence of the Western working class; that revolution is henceforth confined to the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America; that in the metropolitan countries of Western imperialism the working class has become docile and adapted to the system: all these poisonous myths designed to deny the Marxist teaching of the key role of the working class and to disrupt the indispensable unity of the international front against imperialism have now begun to receive a series of shattering blows. Ten millions on strike in France, exceeding the previous record of three millions during the thirties which accompanied the Popular Front. Student demonstrations. Occupation of factories. Democratic challenge to the Gaullist regime.

To the very last the smug prophets of the success and stability of the 'new capitalism' of Western 'free society' clung to their illusions. Marxism, they boasted, had been disproved by practical experience. Revolutions were out of date. The contradictions of

capitalism had been ironed out by modern methods of manipulation. Class divisions were disappearing as modern capitalism was evolving into a new 'classless' society without revolution being necessary to bring it about. Even as the storm was breaking in France in the early days of May, they were still singing hymns to the achievement of class unity in France and acclaiming the stability of the Gaullist regime: "The country gives the appearance of a greater unity than it has had for generations." (Patrick Brogan in *The Times*, May 6, 1968)

As late as May 12, after the student demonstrations, de Gaulle was declared to be "more firmly based in the support of most people, if not students, than either Harold Wilson or Lyndon Johnson" (Peregrine Worsthorne in the *Sunday Telegraph*, May 12).

This was before the working class had come into action with the general strike of 24 hours on May 13, and the mass march of one million in Paris. Thereafter the same Peregrine Worsthorne began to scream about the menace of chaos and anarchy in France

and entitled his article in the *Sunday Telegraph* on June 2 'Dark Days in Europe'. This blindness of the fuglemen of a dying social order to what is happening in the real world is no new story. It was Lord Milner who was dispatched to Russia by Lloyd George in the winter of 1916-17, on a Mission representing the anxious War Cabinet, to enquire into the truth of allegations of a disturbed situation there, and in January, 1917 reported that there was no danger of a revolution in Russia.

Old Songs to New Tunes

Once their old gods are thus exposed, and the earth begins to shake beneath their feet, these apostles of neo-capitalism, anti-Marxism and anti-communism, hastily jump to the other extreme, and begin to proclaim that a wonderful 'revolution' is taking place, which is completely disproving Marxism and its obsolete dogmas about the role of the working class; which is really an idealist revolt against the 'materialism' and 'authoritarianism' equally of the modern capitalist states and the socialist states; and which is in danger of being 'betrayed' by the communists and the Communist Parties. Thus the old song is being sung to a new tune. The moral of the new lie repeats the moral of the old. The 'revolution' is described as being led by the students, who are dragging behind them a backward working class. On the basis of this picture the real positive role of the students, which is one of the most positive features of the present developing situation, is distorted in such a way as to counterpose them to the workers, present them as an independent classless force creating the revolution, while the working class with its 'materialist' concentration on mere economic aims is presented as a brake on the revolution. Thus once again the new picture repeats the old conclusion: the triumphant refutation of the obsolete class theories of Marxism.

This student revolt, which is thus presented as an independent classless force, is next presented as a revolt transcending distinctions of capitalism and socialism, and rebelling universally against the existing 'authoritarian' ruling regime in all countries, equally in capitalist and socialist countries, equally in Paris, Berlin, Prague or Belgrade. Here we can see the latest guise of the old familiar theory of 'convergence': that modern state monopoly capitalism and the modern socialist states are becoming more and more the same thing. This theory revels in all the superficial resemblances (mass production, automation, wages, surplus, problems of the market, and the like) without realising how much each factor, even when the name is the same, profoundly differs in real content, once it is seriously analysed in all its relations and functioning. But the whole theory is an elementary fallacy. The driving force of a society based on capitalist production, with private ownership of the means of production (also within the forms of capitalist nationalisation), and with the built-in contradiction of social production and private appropriation of the surplus, is the drive for maximum profit, for the expansion of capital to expand exploitation and extract the maximum surplus for the owning class. The driving force of a socialist society is maximum production for social benefit; there is no owning class in the means

of production; incomes are based on work, not ownership. This basic distinction transforms every detailed aspect, when examined, even where there are superficial resemblances. The truth of this shows itself with exceptional clearness in this question of the students' demands.

Yes. There is ferment among students also in some socialist countries as well as in capitalist countries. Yes. Students are demanding democratic reform of the universities also in socialist countries as well as in capitalist countries. On both sides they are demanding more student consultation and participation in the running of the universities. So far there is resemblance. But as soon as we begin to examine more closely the content, the distinction appears. The demand for democratic reorganisation of the universities is not merely a demand concerning administration. It is also a demand which involves the whole social order. For it is a demand that the universities shall become representative of the whole population, and not primarily of a privileged elite. In France less than ten per cent of the students come from working class families. In Britain 'only a quarter of those entering university in 1955-56 were of working class origin' (Kelsall Report). There is no comparable problem in socialist countries. But the demand for this change in the class composition of the universities in capitalist countries cannot be fulfilled merely by changes within the universities. This demand necessarily involves the democratic reorganisation of the whole educational system of the entire population. But the fulfilment of this in turn, to be effective, requires the transformation of the existing capitalist class society. With courage and logic the student agitation in the main European capitalist universities has advanced to this demand. Whatever the varied currents in outlook and tactics, they are demanding the replacement of the capitalist social order by socialism.

Identity in Difference

Are the students in the socialist countries demanding the replacement of socialism by capitalism? Not at all. Again, whatever the varied currents, where there is agitation, they are demanding the improvement of socialism. In Belgrade, where there has been the nearest approach to the superficial appearance of resemblance, with occupation of university buildings, they are denouncing what they regard as concessions to capitalism and departures from socialism:

"They see socialised ownership threatened by present economic trends. Recently a group of individuals founded what is said to be a small private shareholders' factory in Yugoslavia. 'We are for social property, and against all attempts to establish shareholder capitalist enterprises', one of the student resolutions read". (*The Times*, June 5, 1968)

Thus the apparent identity of student agitation conceals the difference in class content, corresponding to the difference in class structure in capitalist and socialist countries. All are agitating for democratic structural advance in the running of the universities. But when it comes to the question of the existing social order, the students in the capitalist countries are agitating for the destruction of the existing capitalist social

order and the establishment of socialism. The students in the socialist countries are agitating for the improvement of the existing socialist order and the defence of socialism against the menace of any concessions to capitalism.

The real purpose of this riot of fantasy and distortion which has been let loose in the millionaire press and by the acolytes of the 'new capitalism' in describing the events in France and the developments in Western Europe becomes clear as soon as the treatment turns to the Communist Parties. Here full hatred is revealed. Previously they combated Marxist theories of socialist revolution and denounced Communist Parties as revolutionary enemies of gradualist progressive evolutionary socialist advance. Now these old opponents of revolution have become apostles of a new gospel of a glorious 'revolutionary situation' having arisen in France, with glowing prospects of a socialist revolution, and on this basis they denounce the Communist Party once again, but this time as 'betraying' the revolution. Once again identity in difference. The more it changes, the more it is the same thing. The one stable point in their ever more rapidly swinging compass is hatred of communism and the Communist Party.

City Experts on Revolution

That once staid organ of the City, *The Economist*, whose authoritative expert judgement on all questions of revolutionary strategy and tactics will of course be received with proper respect by all true Marxist-Leninists, summarised the French situation in its International Report on May 25 under the title: 'A Revolution Set Alight by Students, Snuffed Out by Communists'. *The Times* on May 29 published a remarkable feature article by the Assistant Editor of *L'Express* describing the French Communist Party as 'terrified of being swept into a revolution' and a 'surprising rampart of society'. Even the occupation of the factories by the workers was revealed by this ingenious journalist to be a diabolical device of the communist leaders of the CCT 'not so much as a means of putting pressure on the management than as a protection against an invasion by "irresponsible elements from outside the factories"'. The radio commentator described the French CP as 'contemptible'. Not to be outdone by the organs of finance-capital in playing this fashionable modern version of the old anti-communist tune, the *New Statesman's* editor, Paul Johnson, laid down in the issue of May 31 that 'the CP and the Gaullists are natural allies' (powerfully exemplified in the electoral broadcasts of deGaulle), and in the issue of May 31 celebrated 'the astonishing rebuff inflicted by the French workers on the CP'.

"The most marked and attractive characteristics of the revolution through which France is passing is the conspicuous absence of materialism as the dominant motive. This is something which baffles the government and strikes fear into the hearts of the official communist leaders, whose entire approach to politics is based on a materialistic philosophy."

Tribune swelled the chorus with the article of Anthony Arblaster on 'The French Crisis' on May 31: "This struggle has been frustrated, and its aspirations

remain unfulfilled, Why? The answer lies in the conservatism of the French Communists."

The one theme common to all this wide range of organs of opinion from right-wing conservative to some claiming to be on the left is thus anti-communism and hostility to the French Party. This is an old tune. But its violent intensification in the midst of the present French crisis is the highest tribute to the French Communist Party.

A Classic Demonstration of Marxism

What happened in France? For the 99 per cent of the British public who did not have the benefit of the remarkably clear political and factual reporting of Lance Samson in the *Morning Star*, and have been dependent on the contradictory farrago offered them by the millionaire press organs, 'experts' and radio commentators, the confusion must have seemed extraordinary. At one moment that French CP is described as the ally of deGaulle. At the next moment it is denounced by deGaulle as the main menace to France. At one moment the communist leaders of the CGT are denounced for concentrating solely on economic demands and blocking the revolutionary political wishes of the students and workers. At the next moment the CGT is denounced as 'shedding any lingering pretence that its aims are anything but predominantly political' (*The Daily Telegraph*, May 30). No wonder the *Observer* columnist John Crosby complained by June 9 that he had 'leapt from expert to expert in search of the significance of it all,' and that 'rarely can I remember so much significance, all of it wildly conflicting, about a single event'. Yet in fact the events in France during these recent weeks have demonstrated with classic clarity, worthy of the pen of the author of the *Eighteenth Brumaire* or *Class Struggles in France*, the operation of the class forces of capitalist society, also in the present conditions of the advanced stage of the general crisis of capitalism. Here has been revealed the role of the working class as the decisive force confronting capital for social change; and at the same time the fight to win the allies of the working class. The picture has demonstrated the role of the petty bourgeoisie and the varying currents within the petty bourgeoisie; the role of the machinery of state; and the tactics of modernised variants of Bonapartism. Above all—and this is the decisive new feature of the modern situation—there has been demonstrated the key role of the firmly established and experienced Marxist mass party of the working class, able to give leadership in a complex situation which would have otherwise sunk in confusion or been at the mercy of provocative adventures of sections playing into the hands of reaction, and elaborating stage by stage the necessary strategic and tactical line, not for an insurrection which would have suited the book of the military dictatorship, but with patient consistency to build the alliance of the working class and all social sections opposed to monopoly capital in order to unite the majority of the people for the victory of democracy and thereby open the road for the advance to socialism.

The starting point of the events in France should be sought, not in France alone, but in the international context of the whole developing economic and political

crisis of Western capitalist society and wide popular upsurge, which we have analysed in the earlier section of these Notes, and which has erupted to a specially high point in the recent events in France. • Most expressive of the international character of the present battle has been the role of the Vietnam war and the universal movement of solidarity with the Vietnam people. Everywhere opposition to the American war of aggression in Vietnam, and support for the heroic struggle of the Vietnam people, has been the common inspiration which has drawn the widest sections into movement in every country, and thereby sparked the flame of popular revolt. But this indomitable strength and unity and heroism of the Vietnam people over these decades of struggle for their freedom, which has won the admiration of the world, has only been made possible by the leadership of their Marxist-Leninist party, the party of the Vietnam working class and working people, the Vietnam Communist Party, with its continuous record of leadership of over one third of a century. In this sense it can be said that on the international plane the spark which lit the flame was not just some particular event in a particular country, not just the economic and political disequilibrium in each particular country, not just the students' revolt, but the universal inspiration and example and international significance of the struggle led by the Communist Party of Vietnam at the head of the heroic Vietnam people.

Ten Years of Struggle in France

Similarly in France the starting point of the upsurge which has taken place needs to be sought, not just in the immediate increasing economic hardships, or in the student revolt, but in the ten years of continuously developing struggle and mobilisation of the popular forces against the regime of personal dictatorship of deGaulle—a struggle led throughout these ten years by the French Communist Party, at first almost in isolation, but with ever widening support, leading up to the present events. When deGaulle came to power in 1958, the Communist Party was the only party calling for a 'No' vote to his referendum for his new constitution, for which 80 per cent voted Yes and 20 per cent voted No. By 1967 the party's vote had increased from 3.8 million in the election of 1958 to over 5 million in the election of 1967, or 22½ per cent, while the left alliance, which the party had worked to build, in association with Mitterrand, won 47 per cent of the total vote against 43 per cent for the Gaullists. Small wonder that in the present election deGaulle has made his main electoral plank the battle against the CP as the decisive enemy from the point of view of the big bourgeoisie, and for this purpose has brandished the goriest Red Bogy, and sought to brand with it all those left political leaders who have associated with the CP, in the hope to terrify all the vacillating elements of the petty bourgeoisie into voting for conservatism.

"This approach casts M. Mitterrand, M. Guy Mollet, the socialist leader, and M. Mendes-France, in the outer darkness with the communists as enemies of the republic and of freedom. It is hardly a very promising prelude to the task of reform and national reconciliation" (*The Times*, June 4). DeGaulle

has evidently failed to pay attention to the British press and radio 'experts' definition of the CP as his ally and the main bulwark of conservative opposition to a socialist revolution.

It is in this context that the students' revolt in May needs to be seen. The fantastic caricatures by Fleet Street journalists and Fabian experts in revolution to describe this movement as the launching of a grandiose 'French Revolution', stabbed in the back and suffocated by the conservative French CP, has obscured the truly great social and political significance of this awakening and advance of new strata into the struggle. Previously the students in the Western capitalist countries used to be, as regards the majority, a reactionary force. In the countries of national liberation or approaching the democratic revolution the students have always been in the forefront of revolutionary struggle. But in the Western imperialist countries the progressive students used to be in a minority; the majority were either cautiously orthodox, or aristocratic playboys, or openly reactionary, or politically apathetic. Today solemn university seniors dilate on the supposed tradition of British universities to encourage complete freedom of discussion and reasoned expression of all viewpoints, provided there is no violence. Poppcock. Half a century ago, when an Oxford student sought to present a reasoned statement of a Marxist viewpoint on 'Socialism and the War' to a students' meeting, and a handful of rowdy jingo students sought to create a din outside, and broke some windows, the authorities promptly hauled up before them next morning and sent down permanently, not the rowdy jingoes, but the student who had made a reasoned Marxist statement to an orderly peaceful meeting. In the General Strike in 1926 the students provided the blacklegs. During the thirties anti-fascism brought some strengthening of the progressive forces; but the cold war froze things backwards.

Signal of the Future

Therefore when today wide sections of students in all the leading Western capitalist countries have come out in active progressive political struggle, for such aims as far-reaching democratic reform in the universities, against racialism or against the war in Vietnam, and sometimes for the complete transformation of the existing capitalist social order, this is a most welcome and heartwarming sign of the times and a barometer of future social and political change. Of course there is a mixture of all kinds of currents in this ferment. Only a fool would expect prematurely old heads to grow on young shoulders. It is natural that every trend and set of ideas is eagerly discussed. Experience in the struggle will help to sort these things out. Of course the millionaire press and broadcasting and television will greedily seek out the 'wildest' expressions they can find (and it can be assumed that the hundred-handed CIA will also have poked a few dirty fingers in) and will pour out the most lavish flood of publicity around the most picturesque and 'way out' personalities they can display to their public as supposedly 'typical' of 'modern youth', and thus fulfill their task to conceal the real social class issues behind chatter about the 'gulf of the generations'.

But the most striking characteristic of the overwhelming majority of the students entering into the struggle today is their serious, active and practical approach, their candour and their courage.

Decisive Role of the Working Class

It is obvious to everyone, including the students themselves—at any rate to everyone except the New Fabian experts in 'revolution'—that the students are not an independent super-class force able to launch a revolution or overthrow capitalism. Within their university conditions they can combat and have combated with the greatest skill and tenacity to compel changes. But for their wider social aims they can only seek fulfilment as allies of the decisive social force for the fight against capitalism, the working class. 'In the world of capitalism', as the Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party Brezhnev said at its 23rd Congress, 'there still operates with full force the main contradiction of capitalist society—the contradiction between capital and labour'. The truth of this was abundantly demonstrated by the succession of events in France in the days of May. So long as it was a movement of students the Pompidou Government on the night of May 10 let loose the brutal terrorist assault of the notorious riot police. But when on the following morning of May 11 the working class moved into action with the trade union call for a 24-hour general strike on May 13 as the answer to the brutality of the riot police, Premier Pompidou at once hurried to announce on May 11 the withdrawal of the police and a promise to concede the students' demands. There followed the prolonged strike movement, reaching to 10 million, with occupation of factories, combining the economic demands of the workers, voiced by the unions, and the political call, voiced by the Communist Party, for the replacement of the Gaullist regime by a 'Peoples' Government of Democratic Unity. DeGaulle waited in the hope that division would break up the unity which the party was building and the unions maintaining, or that sectional leftist provocations would give him the excuse for repression. The strength of the leadership of the party and the success in maintaining unity defeated his strategy. The giant Paris march on May 29, numbering 800,000 and now directly led by the CGT and the Communist Party, was the decisive proof. On May 30 de Gaulle, after military consultations, delivered his ultimatum: to dissolve the Assembly and call elections in the name of the fight against the Communist Party and its allies as representing the menace of 'totalitarian communism'.

'Why not an insurrection?' demand the New Fabian experts in revolution. Even *The Times* editorial on May 31 knew better:

"The French Communist Party is well educated in the theory and practice of revolutions. It knows that 'left-wing communism'—playing at revolutions—is, in Lenin's famous phrase, 'an infantile disorder'. The takeover of power must be carefully planned, and the party must only strike when success is assured." The most elementary study of Lenin's writings on the eve of October would have shown these 'revolutionary experts' the care and precision with which Lenin measured the exact disposition of forces, how July would

have been premature because 'the army and the provinces could and would have marched on Petrograd', but how by October the Bolsheviks had won the majority in both the capitals, in the Soviet delegation to Kerensky's Democratic Conference, 'the entire Baltic fleet and all the Russian troops in Finland', 49 per cent voting for the Bolsheviks in the Moscow elections and 'among the soldiers fourteen out of seventeen thousand', etc., etc. Was there any such ripeness of the situation in France in May 1968? The unions, with three politically divided federations, still only organised together one-fifth of the working class. The majority of the workers on strike were concentrating on the economic demands more than the political call. In the stronghold of the Renault plant the convenor of one of the groups of shop stewards, Roger Collete, was reported as saying to *The Sunday Times* correspondent in their issue of June 2:

"If you watch the people at the strike meeting you will notice one thing. When they are talking about their immediate demands they are as one, but when any of the speakers mention politics it is only the Communists who applaud."

The party correctly combined the economic demands and the political call appropriate to the situation. The statement of May 17 proclaimed the aim 'to win the pressing demands of the workers, and, beyond that, to end the Gaullist regime and to install with the least possible delay democracy opening the road to socialism'. The declaration of May 18 calls for the removal of the deGaulle Government and the formation of 'a popular and democratic Governments'. The Manifesto of May 20 set out the aims: (1) 'satisfaction of the fundamental demands of the working class' in the economic and social sphere; (2) 'satisfaction of the fundamental demands at the universities'; and then (3) the political call, 'the common aim of all forces which want to build France's future':

"The great mass of people, whose action is decisive, are not taking part in an effort of plaster the cracks in the personal power regime, nor in an insurrectional strike, but in a vast movement leading to the elimination of the Gaullist Government and of the Gaullist regime, and the accession of a real Republican regime, with all the left forces, opening the road to Socialism."

This is the battle which goes forward.

The problem of France for over a century and a half has been the ceaseless confrontation and successions of revolution and counter-revolution, with a balance of massive forces divided between the two camps, and with temporary victories of the working class and the people followed by the restoration of conservative reaction. To solve this situation the first task is for the working class and its party to build up the broad alliance with other social sections against the domination of big capital, and thus to establish a stable popular majority capable of winning the battle for democracy and opening the road to Socialism. This is the task which the French Communist Party and people are setting themselves to accomplish.

—R. P. D.

TANGENT

on the encyclical

'YOU'RE scare babies,' said Pope Paul. 'Don't tell me you take your Malthus all that seriously.'

'I do,' said Dr Chandrasekhar, India's Family Planning Minister. 'Terribly seriously. While the population increases in geometrical progression, resources increase in arithmetical progression.'

'I don't quite agree,' said Jagjivan Ram. 'It all depends on what stand you take on Viet-Nam.'

'What's Viet Nam got to do with Malthus?' demanded Pope Paul.

'Oh, everything,' said Jagjivan Ram. 'You wouldn't have asked this question had you the faintest idea of how man comes by his daily bread.' You might have to let your arm be twisted, and let yourself be humiliated.'

'Look,' said Pope Paul, 'this is slandering God.'

'God,' said Jagjivan Ram, 'who's talking of God?'

'I thought you were,' said Pope Paul.

'You got us all wrong,' said Dr. Chandrasekhar. 'We were talking about Lyndon Johnson.'

It was the horrified Pontiff's turn now to cry *God*. He did it a half dozen times, and actually woke up God who was having his weekday nap.

'What's the racket, Paul?' asked the Ancient One.

'Bogus claims, Chief,' said Pope Paul. 'Here are a few characters claiming it's Lyndon Johnson who's providing the daily bread, and that after a good deal of arm twisting.'

'Of course,' said God's voice, booming sleepily out of the cloud, 'he's the one. And I want no trouble.'

Soon they could hear the snoring from the cloud; God had gone back to sleep.

'How do you like that?' said Dr. Chandrasekhar with a smile.

'Well,' said the Pontiff, greatly demoralised.

'And now,' pressed Dr Chandrasekhar. 'what do you say to the arithmetical and geometrical progressions?'

'It isn't true,' said Pope Paul. 'After all, food also multiplies in geometrical progression.'

'Where does it multiply?' demanded Jagjivan Ram, with professional curiosity.

'Loaves and fishes,' said Pope Paul. 'We had done it once.'

'Oh that,' said Jagjivan Ram. 'We too had done it. There was Draupadi's Akshaya Patra endlessly ladling out food. Draupadi also cooked beef in it. It's all in the *Vedas*, all about beef steak.'

'I don't fancy cow slaughter ban much myself,' said Dr Chandrasekhar. 'It only drives a wedge between us and our beef-eating allies, and makes it more difficult to contain China.'

'But you can't contain China with the pill,' said Pope Paul.

'You can,' said Jagjivan Ram.

'Chandrasekharbhai has a plan. One child in every five is Chinese. So Chandrasekharbhai is using loops, helicopters and the red-triangle which is like the Mekong delta, to get people to stop having more than three children. If there's no fourth child, there certainly can't be a fifth.'

'I assure you, Holy Father,' said Dr Chandrasekhar, 'I'm doing this merely to contain China. You ought to withdraw your Encyclical. After all we can't embarrass Lyndon Johnson in this crucial fight to contain China.'

'And then, there's the question of how much wheat Lyndon Johnson will let us have,' added Jagjivan Ram.

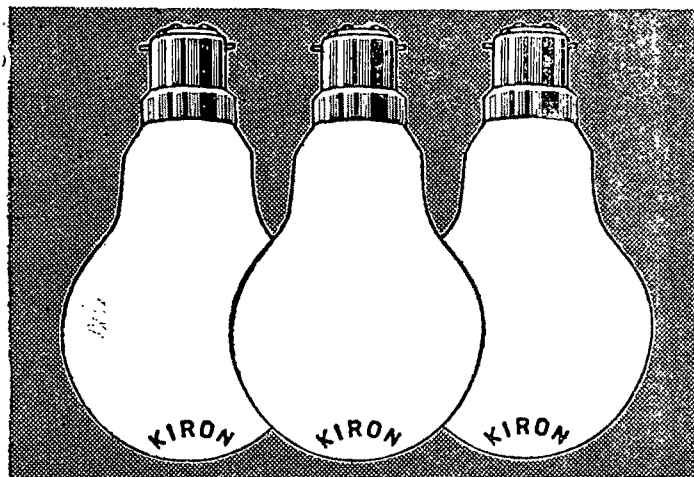
'But,' said Pope Paul, 'I'm also for peace in Viet Nam, unfortunately.'

'I want no trouble,' said God, waking again on his cloud, 'I want no row with Lyndon Johnson. Square it up, Paul.'

As they were trooping out, Morarji Desai was the last to speak, 'It doesn't really help, Holy Father, to have fewer children either. Look, I have one son, and even that's giving me endless trouble.'

—Charyaka

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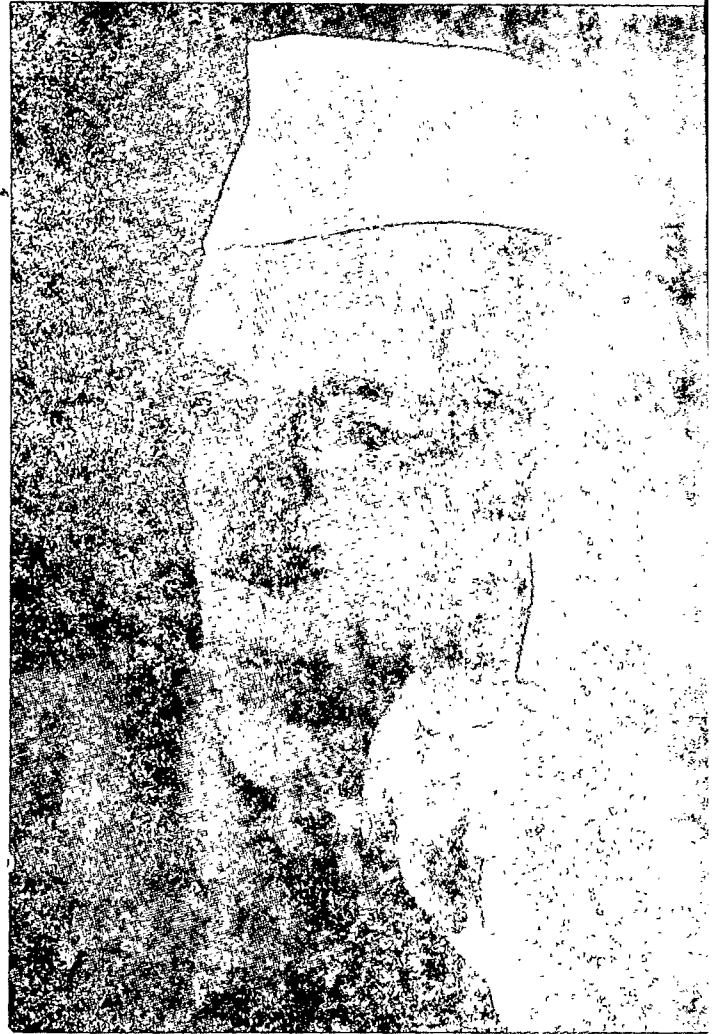
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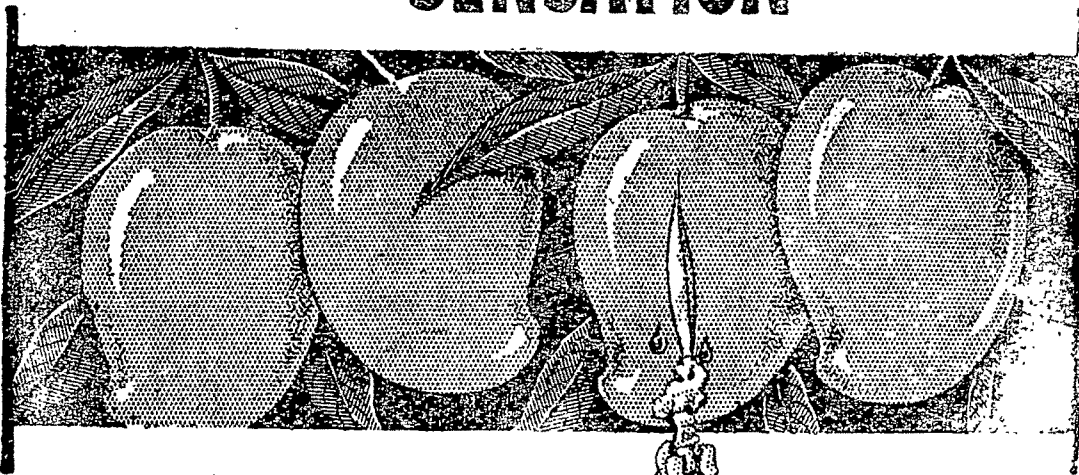
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MAINSTREAM

TIME TO QUIT

DEPUTY Prime Minister Morarji Desai has been technically cleared by the Lok Sabha of the charge of having misled the House twice in regard to the business connections of his son, Sri Kantilal Desai, but the charge that the son utilised the position of his father to advance his personal interests remains. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's argument that the Opposition members had not produced any evidence to substantiate the latter charge will hardly carry weight with a public familiar with the practice of close relatives of those in power securing personal benefits not available to others.

In similar circumstances the late Pratap Singh Kairon had to face a judicial inquiry after stepping down from Chief Ministership of Punjab. The central leadership of the Congress Party found the pressure of public opinion irresistible in that case and had to give in. It is by no means clear why a different standard is being applied to Sri Morarji Desai. The only possible inference is that while Kairon had no backers among Big Business interests and had made himself unpopular with the tycoons by some of his measures, Sri Desai enjoys the support of this influential section whose hold on the Government and the Congress Party is notorious.

A great deal has been said about Sri Desai's virtues; it is obviously forgotten that in public life a man's integrity is judged not merely by the criterion of his receiving or not receiving direct personal benefit from occupying high office but by his capacity to prevent persons close to him from taking undue advantage of his position to further their own private interests. In the present instance the person accused of taking such advantage is the Deputy Prime Minister's son; Sri Madhu Limaye has produced before the Lok Sabha a letter written by Sri Kantilal in his capacity as private secretary to Sri Morarji Desai. The father cannot escape responsibility for the activities of his son unless he had earlier disowned the latter; nor will the claim that the father was quite unaware of his son's activities in the circumstances convince any fair-minded person.

There can thus be no doubt that Sri Morarji Desai is culpable on two counts: first, giving his son a position or status which patently is one that can be misused; and secondly, failing to accept responsibility like a man and step down from office to face

a full and proper inquiry. By her defence of Sri Morarji Desai, however half-hearted, the Prime Minister has shown that she attaches greater importance to the requirements of internal party politics than to the larger national interest which requires that those in power should be well above suspicion of this kind.

It is to be noted that even those sections which have reason to be well disposed towards Sri Morarji Desai in view of his reactionary policies have been unable to rise to his defence. On the other hand, some of them have had to say publicly that the Deputy Prime Minister should not have placed himself in such a position by appointing his son as his private secretary. One went to the extent of pointing out that Gandhiji, whose devout follower Sri Desai is supposed to be, did not hesitate to disown one of his sons of whose conduct he sternly disapproved.

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Sri Morarji Desai's loyalty to Big Business may be entirely due to his own reactionary social and economic ideas, but it is obvious that he has allowed his talents to be utilised to further the interests of the affluent minority determined to prevent by all means at their disposal the emergence of a full-fledged democracy in this country. By voluntarily getting entangled in the tentacles of India's biggest industrial and business tycoons Sri Desai has placed himself in a prison from which he cannot free himself. He is thus both an accomplice and a victim of Big Business. That is his personal tragedy, but it certainly cannot be allowed to be India's.

Sri Morarji Desai is by no means the only friend of vested interests in the Government and the Congress. There are others like Sri S. K. Patil to whom democracy is synonymous with the continuing exploitation of the common people by a handful of powerful business houses. Together these elements subserve the interests not of the people but of their enemies. The time has come for the Congress Party as a whole to decide whether it will continue to be employed as a tool of vested interests in industry, trade and agriculture, or will make an attempt to rid itself of elements which are inimical to its professed economic and social goals. The "collective leadership" slogan put out by Sri Patil is aimed at confusing the issues that the Congress Party really faces today: the party has to decide before it is too late whether it has any intention of reverting to the

ideals placed before it and the nation by Jawaharlal Nehru, or will be content to remain a pliable instrument in the hands of the Birlas, Tatas, Jains and the rest.

If the ruling party at the Centre has the least intention of remaining a party dedicated to democratic values, it must ask Sri Morarji Desai to vacate office and face a proper inquiry into the charges made in respect of his son's business dealings while being close to the Deputy Prime Minister as his private secretary. It must also insist on a thorough investigation of the connections maintained with various business houses by some of the so-called stalwarts of the party, both in office and outside the seats of power. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet as a whole must cease to give the impression that they are shielding personalities at the cost of principles. If on the other hand the attempt is to offer more and more alibis in order to keep certain persons in power, the conclusion is inescapable that the central leadership of the Congress has finally decided to bid goodbye to its democratic and honourable pretensions. It is for the enlightened opinion inside the Congress to decide now which way to turn: to the people who are the ultimate arbiters of national destiny, or to the handful of industrialists and businessmen by whom unworthy men like Morarji Desai have permitted themselves to be exploited against the national interest, and at the cost of the public exchequer.

August 20

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

BRINKMANSHIP IN WAGE POLICY

Six lakhs for tool-down action on August 12 in West Bengal and the imminent protest stoppages threatened by four lakhs of coalminers and two million railwaymen, P&T and other departmental employees of the Central Government—apart from the prolonged strikes in major newspapers—all centre around the basic demand for wage revision. Also standing forth with strike notices handy are the Port and Dock workers fed up with a Wage Board which cannot deliver the goods in four years.

More are likely to follow in textile and engineering.

The wage disputes snowballing into formidable dimensions are of various characters. In certain cases, the disputes are about implementing the decisions of wage-fixing bodies and in certain other cases, they arise from the failure of wage-fixing bodies to bring forth agreed recommendations. A third category is in the realm of finding an appropriate wage-fixing machinery as in jute textiles, and more important still, the case of the

omnibus grouping called the Central Government employees.

The State is the principal "employer" in this country and as per the Employment Review (1966-67), the latest published by the Labour Ministry, out of 16.3 million employed in various industries and services (establishments employing 10 and more in private sector and all public sector ones covered), 9.6 million were employed in the State sector and 6.6 million in private sector. Industrial units of any significance employ over 10 in the

private sector and hence the figures can be taken to be roughly corresponding to the employment in the organised sector, covered by centralised or regional industrial wage regulation.

Since 1957 when the wage policy under the Second Five Year Plan was spelt out by the 15th Indian Labour Conference (the concept of "need-based minimum wages" was evolved at that time), we have been experimenting with industrial wage fixation at the national level through tripartite wage boards.

Just about the same time, covering employments under the Central Government, that is, P&T, Railways, Civil Aviation and other services, a Pay Commission was appointed. The Commission was, of course, not appointed on Government's initiative but came about only on the eve of a threatened all-India strike by the Posts and Telegraph employees. The Commission was also charged to announce an interim relief.

While the wage boards largely went by some norms and standards of collective bargaining, and provided a mixed fare, the Second Pay Commission which had no member representing the employees on it (unlike the First Pay Commission) missed the main point that the Central Government employees had among them a vast majority of industrial workers (as in Railways, Defence Production, P and T, Civil Aviation, CPWD, etc.) than non-industrial, administrative categories. The Commission, advised by the Ministry of Finance (Sri Morarji Desai was the Finance Minister then), chose to disown the tripartite recommendations on fixing a need-based wage. What was worse, the Commission began to discuss how "sedentary" work in civil service (ignoring the majority of industrial work categories) could be carried on on a lower scale of calories than what Dr Akroyd had recommended, provided for an ounce of groundnut as protein to balance the diet—all to prove that a minimum wage of Rs 85 per month was reasonable enough at 115 points in the all-India consumer price index

(1949=100). At the same price level, the wage on need-based norms was around Rs 125.

While all wage boards recommended linking of Dearness Allowance with the consumer price index and evolved certain formulas for the purpose, the Second Pay Commission argued against such automatic linking. It was left to the discretion of the Government whether to revise DA after an average of 10 points rise was reached and every time the employees had to organise agitations and threaten direct action before the issue could be amicably settled.

The First Pay Commission was appointed under the impact of the post-second world war strike wave and under pressure from the trade unions of the P and T employees and Railwaymen. The Commission performed the historic role of standardising an all-India minimum wage in the departmental services under the Central Government. While the First Pay Commission had a progressive role in the evolution of the wages system in India, the performance of the Second Pay Commission was rather an anti-climax. The industrial workers in railways, ordnance factories and civilian employment under Defence establishments, Posts and Telegraphs, Civil Aviation, etc., were specially given a raw deal by the Second Pay Commission when the Commission rejected the norms of need-based wage fixation and derailed the process towards rational wage fixation as was envisaged at the 15th Indian Labour Conference.

Transport and Communications (except the private sector in road transport) which came to be the largest nationalised undertaking in the country, the Defence production units, etc., were kept apart from the general scheme of industrial wage fixation because organisationally, these were kept as departments of the Government and figuring in the overall budget of the Central Government. Thus we have the strange proposition that a highly-complex loco factory at Chittaranjan and similar engineering units of the railways should have

no parity in wages with engineering wages in private sector. The same is the case with the Defence production units where confusion is worse confounded when there are both departmentally run units as well as units run as corporations. We have therefore a situation in which State as the "model (!) employer", pays one wage in a public sector colliery, a totally different wage in a Railway workshop, something else in Ports and Docks, and altogether different in other public sector units.

The end result of this strange management organisation in public sector, partly departmental and partly corporation, is that a problem of industrial wage fixation has been mixed up with the problem of framing budgetary policies of the Central Government. And the bulk of the wage-paid employment in the organised sector in India is under the public sector.

In recent years, in the advanced capitalist countries, "incomes policies" to be centrally directed and controlled, holding down wage increases, have been suggested and various forms of State intervention to impose wage restraints are being brought into vogue. In India, the Reserve Bank has been at work to expound a theoretical basis for an "incomes policy" for India. The total irrelevance of the proposition in Indian conditions can be seen from the fact that the basic aim of the Fourth Plan's labour policy has to be just the same as that of the First Plan—to restore the pre-Plan level of purchasing power of the wage packet, that is, restore the real wage standard which had been eroded sharply by the rising prices. Clearly, the money wage increases have not kept pace with the rise in prices, and the wages in real terms have fallen. Then, there is the case for raising the *real wages* standard to give wage-earners a share in the rise in productivity since it would not be a fair deal that the gains of development are entirely siphoned off by Big Business which has built huge monopoly empires.

However, the fact remains

that with the economic and industrial organisations employing several hundreds of thousands chained to the governmental budget, the policy of wage-restraint has been operating in a big way in the Indian situation through the budgetary policies of the Government. And far more relevant to our present discussion is that the demand for a wage increase in the departmental sector involves no ordinary collective bargaining but it directly involves politics, since budgetary policies are not settled through collective bargaining. What follows from it in a negative way, is the tendency to convert every situation of such a demand for wage-revision into an exercise in brinkmanship, that is, never to consider the demand on merits until a crisis-point is reached and industrial peace is threatened.

After the 1960 strike of the Central Government employees which was in protest against the Second Pay Commission's reactionary recommendations, and after a good deal of time spent in getting tough with the employees' organisations, withdrawing their recognition, etc., Government came round to evolve a bipartite machinery modelled on the Whitley Councils in the U K, through which wage disputes, among other issues, could be discussed and settled with guarantees of compulsory arbitration on disputes not settled at bipartite level.

Several months were wasted in founding this machinery—the Joint Consultative Machinery

(JCM)—over the official demand that unions should "abjure" strikes before coming into the JCM, after the earlier threat of statutory ban on strikes in Central services could not be pushed through. The history of the brief period of existence of the JCM shows that official brinkmanship again prevailed to precipitate a strike situation as in August-September last year over the implementation of the Gajendragadkar award on D A. This year, again, the brinkmanship persists when the much-trumpeted built-in arbitration under the JCM is denied on the crucial issue of wage-revision and the unions have virtually walked out of the JCM and most of them have called for an all-India token strike.

The argument against arbitration on wages issue is that wage policy formulation is a political function of the higher State organs and obviously not a matter to be settled through arbitration. On the face of it, the argument might appear unexceptionable but it only begs the question whether the country has no wage policy at all and what has happened to all the pompous declarations in the Plan policy documents. And it also raises the very relevant question whether it is the prerogative of the Finance Ministry to subvert the accepted policies (for instance, the 15th Tripartite conclusions on wage policy during the Second Plan) in the name of alleged financial difficulties or whether it is the job of the Finance Ministry to find the

money to implement the declared Plan policies.

It is, indeed, not the employee's fault that the country's railway system, communication, engineering, postal services, defence production units, etc. have no autonomous administrative organisation and by mere historical accident, these units came to be put under administrative departments, requiring even a Rs 5 wage increment (to correct an anomaly in rate-fixing of an operative in a railway or P & T workshop) to be vetted by the Finance Ministry, in the light of the overall budgetary position of the mighty Government of India.

Each of the individual sectors, Railways, P & T, Defence production units, etc. has achieved certain norms of economic functioning and productivity has risen all round and within the framework of their financial working, a rational wage system can certainly be fitted into, without adversely affecting their economic working. But then the kind of cost accounting, pricing, etc. practised in the departmental undertakings are very peculiar and the exchequer has been interested mainly in using them for tax-gathering purposes rather than running them on sound commercial lines. Therefore, the bogey that is sought to be built up about any wage increase for employees bringing in more oppressive taxes on the common man will not scare anybody once the red-tape behind the bogey-building is understood.

The basic objection to any wage revision from the "budge-

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tary" angle is, of course, that such a step would further increase what is called the "non-Plan" expenditure, thus cutting into investments in development. Two points arise in this connection. *Firstly*, the credibility of the assumption that wages and salaries paid in commercial undertakings and administrative services should be taken as "non-Plan" and not "Plan" expenditure. All non-wage costs which also soar in inflationary conditions are, of course, "Plan" expenditure under the peculiar logic of the Government accountants, and it is common knowledge that Plan expenditure earmarked for industrial or commercial investments have far exceeded the original estimates and in this, quite a sizeable chunk is quietly spirited out to fill private pockets.

Secondly, a large part of expenditure on administrative services is actually investment in social overheads, and the organisation of the State itself assumes in part the responsibility of economic and social management when centralised planning is attempted. While no one would try to explain away the wastage, corruption and bureaucratic bungling, the fact is that bulk of the administrative machinery contributes to economic development in a total sense of the term. It is not, again, the employee's fault that the administration is not better managed: the fault lies entirely with the political leadership running the administration.

Thus, the largely artificial and arbitrary division as between "Plan" and "non-Plan" expenditures—and including increases in wages or DA under the latter category—cannot be an excuse for denying the consideration of the demand for wage revision, in the context of an accepted wage policy—to repeat again, the policy on need-based wages enunciated as part of Second Plan wage policy. In fact, since income distribution should be a part of overall planning, expenditure necessary to implement the policy on wages should necessarily be considered as legitimate Plan expenditure.

After years of neglect, the realisation has at last now dawned on the authorities that our foodgrains requirements can be fully met not by improved productivity in U S farms and brought here through the P L 480 pipeline but that something can be done in India itself. We are now informed by the Planning Commission that in *one year*, the use of nitrogenous fertilisers went up by 45 per cent and of phosphatic fertilisers by 60 per cent. Area covered by plant protection increased by another 50 per cent. About six million acres have been brought under high-yielding varieties of seeds during the Kharif season and another nine million acres expected to have been covered during the Rabi season. All these are claimed as the "new agricultural strategy" accomplished in just 12 months and are greatly welcome. However, droughts, famines and national humiliation of begging for food were not very necessary as prerequisites to work out the "new" strategy. All these could have been done years ago rather than spending foreign exchange on trips to beg for PL 480 doles under the "old" strategy!

State trading in foodgrains rather belatedly and halfheartedly accepted, (although now worked haphazardly) the offer of minimum support prices for farm produce and such other steps and the new agricultural strategy were all held up not because of financial stringency but because of political unwillingness. The brinkmanship on food policy which led to famines is not fully reversed but some realism has been forced on the political leadership. Perhaps the man-days lost in industrial disputes and industrial unrest should rise several times over before the "new" strategy on wages could be brought into vogue and the current brinkmanship abandoned.

One word about "capacity to pay" which is claimed to be greatly relevant to fixation of wages—before we end the present discussion. It was the solemn assertion of the jute mill managements and cotton mill owners that they had no capacity

to pay fair wages to workers in these industries. They nevertheless had the capacity after pleading incapacity before Wage Boards, to buy up or start new units in engineering, chemicals, coalmines and even big newspapers. And now the same gentry owning the big newspapers and gaining fabulous profits out of this "industry" plead incapacity to pay even the less than need-based wage rates awarded by the Wage Boards. Jute profits bought up coal mines and super-profits from both got invested in engineering and chemicals and newspapers and all together brought in more super-profits and more ownership and control; but all together, it is claimed, have no capacity to pay need-based wages. And the State which denies identical demand to its employees also comes forth with the same plea, while it has the "capacity" to provide concessions after concessions to Big Business in the name of creating a better "climate" for investment.

Which all proves that wage rates are seldom settled on the basis of employers' balance-sheets or Government's budget papers: these are best settled through collective bargaining backed by united action.

August 19

M. A.

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Musings on Czechoslovakia—II

N. C.

THE significance of the recent happenings in Czechoslovakia has been interpreted by many circles as a struggle for the enlargement of democracy within the socialist system. In fact, this aspect of the Czechoslovak developments has been highlighted by many Western commentators as the revolt of democracy against Communist "totalitarianism"; and even the historic traditions of Czechoslovakia from John Huss downwards have been mobilised to prove this picturesque thesis.

The question of relationship between democracy and socialism is as old as Marxism itself. The debate between Marx and Lassalle, for instance, on the contours of the socialist society of the future is most interesting, and it has a direct bearing on the present debate over Czechoslovakia. In this discussion, Marx could show the hollowness of liberal democracy in so far as the means of production being in the hands of a few, liberty and equality have little meaning for the dispossessed multitude whose labour is exploited by those who control capital. Lassalle thought socialism would provide "the equal right of all to an equal product of labour". Marx pointed out that such "equal right" would be an injustice since people are not alike, and it would be a mistake to equate the weak with the strong, the married with the unmarried, those with children and those with none. Marx thus punctures the theory of equality:

"With an equal performance

The first article in this series appeared in Mainstream (August 10, 1968).

of labour, and hence an equal share in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on. To avoid all these defects, right would have to be unequal rather than equal."

Against this Marx showed that under communism, society will inscribe on its banner: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." But even before that goal of communism is reached, socialism itself has to ensure: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his labour."

Coming further down in history, Lenin in the thick of the Russian Revolution, wrote in August-September 1917:

"Democracy means equality. The great significance of the proletariat's struggle for equality and of equality as a slogan will be clear if we correctly interpret it as meaning the abolition of classes. But democracy means only *formal* equality. And as soon as equality is achieved for all members of society *in relation* to ownership of the means of production, that is, equality of labour and wages, humanity will inevitably be confronted with the question of advancing farther, from formal equality to actual equality, that is, to the operation of the rule 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs'. By what stages, by means of what practical measures humanity will proceed to this supreme aim we do not and cannot know. But it is important to realise how infinitely mendacious is the ordinary bourgeois conception of socialism as something lifeless, rigid, fixed once and for all, whereas

in reality only socialism will be the beginning of a rapid, genuine, truly mass forward movement, embracing first the majority and then the whole of the population, in all spheres of public and private life."

In the fifty years since the establishment of socialism in one country, this journey towards a more equitable order is marked by ups and downs, and yet the direction is never lost. More than half of this period, socialism could hold its own in only one country under conditions of virtual siege by the world of capitalism. And this is a country where under the old order, it was not liberal democracy that had flourished as in Britain, but the most ruthless autocracy in modern times, that of the Tsars. Both these factors—the encirclement by imperialism and the background of Tsarism—left their birthmarks on the new social order. In fact, Marx in his book, *Critique of the Gotha Programme* envisaged that socialism would "in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually" carry "the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it comes."

Even then, Lenin in the early days of the new Soviet State did allow with his foresight a degree of democratic conduct—including the right of open dissent—which no democracy in history has permitted in times of a war of survival. If aberrations had taken place during the years of rigour under Stalin, much of it could perhaps be traced to the historical traditions of Russia more than to the compulsions of the socialist system. In 1923 Lenin answering critics said: "... it does not indeed occur to them

that because Russia stands on the border-line between the civilised countries and the countries which this war has for the first time definitely brought into the orbit of civilisation—all the Oriental, non-European countries—she could and was indeed bound to reveal certain distinguishing features; although these of course are in keeping with the general line of world development, they distinguish her revolution from those which took place in the West European countries, and introduce certain partial innovations as the revolution moves on to the countries of the East.” (*Our Revolution: Apropos of the Notes of N. Sukhonov*).

Very often the traducers of the Soviet Union conveniently forget this historical background. It was only when after World War II, the Soviet Union not only survived the mightiest military attack that any country had faced in history, but extended the frontiers of socialism to the banks of the Elbe that problems of democracy under socialism assumed new significance. In fact, it was Czechoslovakia in 1948 that showed how even a parliamentary form of government could become the handmaid of a new social order by allowing the armed working class to come out into the street.

And yet the East European laboratories had their inherent limitations for the unprecedented experiment in social behaviour. Unlike the Soviet Union, revolution in these countries came not through internal combustion so much as the impact of the smashing victories of the Red Army; for, without the Red Army, there was no question of socialism in these small countries. Inevitably, such a circumstance could not but leave its mark on the process of social development in these countries. It was not always a case of dictation from Moscow as the enthusiastic imitation of a successful model. And what most of them tried to copy was the model set by Stalin's Soviet Union.

But things could not remain static and it was a sign of the robust health of the socialist system that the most ruthless

criticism of the aberrations under Stalin came from the Soviet leaders themselves at their own Party Congress in 1956. Usually, a severe introspection in a nation comes in the wake of a big calamity like defeat in war or degeneration in civil strife. In contrast, the Soviet Union by its own volition unlocked the gates of open debate smashing up the impediment of the Cult of Personality. If today all the new, unorthodox strivings have found a place in the socialist world, thanks for it is to a large measure due to the Soviet Communist Party itself for the world-shaking decisions of the Twentieth Congress in 1956.

Its tremendous impact could be absorbed by world communism according to the capacity and the tradition of its respective sectors. If China could not stomach the criticism of Stalin and preserved, if not vulgarised further, the Cult of Personality, the reason for it has to be sought to a large extent in the social background of Chinese communism—in what Lenin called in the above-quoted extract “certain partial innovations as the revolution moves on to the countries of the East.” If revolt broke out in Hungary to the point of an imminent collapse of the socialist system itself, this may be mainly due to the admittedly weak political foundation of the working class movement with a practically emigre Communist Party returning in the bandwagon of the Red Army.

The reasons for the comparatively quiet repercussions of the 1956 stirrings in Czechoslovakia are yet to be analysed: however, it would be a superficial observation to ascribe this to the iron grip of the Novotny clique, as is being made out today. Perhaps a more plausible reason for the 12-year delayed-action impact in Czechoslovakia is that with a comparatively advanced economic base and a Party leadership more solidly entrenched in the confidence of the working class, the need for a drastic change was not so acutely felt at that time. The present writer can recall the sense of complacency of the comrades in Prague in the winter

of 1956 when raging storms were blowing in neighbouring Warsaw and Budapest. If the Soviet Communist Party initiated the revolutionary process in 1956 in its own homeland, it did not command its repeat performance in other countries of the socialist world: in the true spirit of internationalism, it let every country go through its own process. If Hungary and Poland had it in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, one does not know when it will arrive in Rumania or the GDR or in the distant China.

And not in every country will the process of change unfold itself in the same pattern. Yugoslavia for instance has yet to complete this transformation: Yugoslav leaders may hail the excitement in Prague as the expression of uninhibited dissent, but the very same dissent they would not permit to a Djilas at home.

An important factor in this striving for change to a less and less rigid system of social control is the advance of productive forces. The technological revolution that comprises the breathtaking spectrum from cosmonautics to cybernetics, from the rocket to the computer, cannot but leave its impact on the mind of man. The worker in many of the industries in the highly advanced countries is not just a skilled hand but a technocrat, and under the wider facilities and better conditions of security under socialism, he is a much more civilised man than his forefathers. A cosmonaut's father may have fought in the battle of Stalingrad, but his son displays no less heroism in the outer space though his heroism is of an entirely different order.

It is on this point that our traditional yardsticks of democratic liberties do not always help. The Prague intellectuals' *Two Thousand Words* may read very revolutionary, but by all accounts, Czechoslovakia's working class—the key revolutionary force in a highly industrialised country—has by and large remained unstirred by it, and nowhere in history from the days of Plato and Pericles have the intellectuals by

(Continued on Page 35)

Pakistan's Record of Self-Determination

TAPAN DAS

EVEN after twenty years of independence, Pakistan can hardly claim that the entire body of her citizens feel that they are enjoying the right of self-determination. In fact, the majority of the people—those living in East Pakistan, Baluchistan and other minority provinces—have voiced serious concern in this regard. Depressed masses of East Pakistan have been agitating from time to time, for the removal of growing disparity between the two wings.

An Opposition leader from Lahore, Arif Iftikhar, ridiculed Foreign Minister Arshad Husain's statement that "the people of Kashmir should be given the right of all self-determination". In the National Assembly itself, Arif asked, "Where is the justification in demanding the same right (for Kashmir Valley) which Ayub regime has refused to grant to the people of East Pakistan, Azad Kashmir and Baluchistan, who have been clamouring for it, right from the day Pakistan came into being?"

The enormity of the inequities from which East Pakistan suffers could be gauged from what the Opposition leaders complained during the debates in the National Assembly and Provincial Council at their recent sittings.

First, the economic condition of East Pakistan under the Ayub regime is in shambles. According to Ashraf Husain, East Pakistan at present can invest only 30 per cent of her foreign credit for development purposes. Its indebtedness has reached a stage where 70 per cent of her foreign credits go for paying interests to the creditor countries and to the Central Government. During the last ten years, East Pakistan's

debts have risen from Rs. 55 crores to Rs. 690.8 crores. A few other loans added to this figure, totals Rs. 45 crores. For this huge amount, East Pakistan has to pay Rs. 39 crores annually as interest and capital repayments. It was also feared that these figure would reach Rs. 1000 crores by 1970, when East Pakistan will have to pay a total of Rs. 47 crores annually on this score alone. Interestingly enough, East Pakistan's direct income is only Rs. 41 crores per annum.

Commenting on this staggering state of East Pakistan's economy, one progressive daily from Dacca wrote editorially, "In the name of implementing the Budget proposals for using foreign credit for development purposes, the Government has been appointing in different fields a large number of 'White elephants' that is foreign experts. Paradoxically, the huge amount paid to these experts is tax-free. On the other hand, some of the conditions of foreign credit are so fantastic that taking loans from the Western countries has now become a big joke. These conditions are: compulsory import of goods at a much higher cost on their own ships, and repayment of credits in foreign exchange. Pakistan, it is suggested, must try to seek more and more loans from the Socialist camp and have trade agreements with them, where there were no rigid and conditional bindings as compared to the western countries."

Agriculture

An Opposition member of the Provincial Council, Samsur Rahman, has alleged that in the field of agriculture, Pakistan's planning is a total failure. Citing

instances of abnormal disparity between the two wings, he has revealed that the density of population in East Pakistan is 979 per square mile, as against 138 only in the case of West Pakistan. But 92 per cent of the cultivable land in East Pakistan is without irrigation facilities and 40 per cent of the people are agricultural labourers. Moreover, 35 per cent of these labourers do not have their own ploughs for tilling the land. And there is no provision for employment for these vast masses in the current year's East Pakistan budget.

Further, 48 per cent of the peasants do not possess any land. Twenty per cent of them in East Pakistan own less than three acres of land; 10 per cent less than five acres; another 10 per cent less than seven acres; and 12 per cent have more than seven acres. Eighty-eight per cent of the peasants need 104 lakh tonnes of foodgrains, but they produce only 50 lakh tonnes and 12 per cent of the rich peasants consume 14 lakh tonnes, but their production is 58 lakh tonnes. These rich peasants are the traditional hoarders who fully exploit the scarcity conditions and corner a huge amount of money through black-marketing in foodgrains.

The Government has failed to arrange irrigation facilities for even 10 per cent of the cultivable land, but it lays absurd claim of being able to make Pakistan self-sufficient in food by 1970.

Azizur Rahman, another prominent leader of the Opposition said in the National Assembly, that in spite of Government's vigorous campaign, it was an undeniable fact that during the last ten years (1958-68), production of tobacco in the eastern

wing declined from 45,000 tonnes to 27,000 tonnes, while in West Pakistan it rose from 14,000 tonnes to 104,000 tonnes during the same period. Sugarcane production also has risen in West Pakistan from 37 lakh tonnes to 1,222 lakh tonnes, but in the case of East Pakistan, the increase is from 32 lakh tonnes to 75 lakh tonnes only.

Industry

In the Third Five Year Plan (1965-70), the Government has allocated Rs 1,600 crores for the development of public-sector industries in East Pakistan. But even after the expiry of three years of this Plan period, the Government has been able to invest Rs 550.4 crores, which is 34 per cent only of the estimated total outlay. The Government hardly seems to be enthusiastic in developing this sector of the economy.

The performance of the private-sector industries in East Pakistan, is still more disappointing. It could attain only up to one-third of the expected results, in the last three years. The Government has, however, proposed to spend Rs 200 crores during the current year, and even if this target is reached, there would still remain a shortfall of 50 per cent in the original plan proposals.

Nurul Huq, gave instances of deliberate Government negligence in respect of industrial development in East Pakistan and said, despite the Central Government's repeated assurances of allocating 10 cargo ships to East Pakistan, it did not grant the necessary foreign exchange to purchase of these ships. After the hopes for foreign exchange were belied and all possible efforts were abandoned, East Pakistan was forced to sell the licences to West Pakistani industrialists for these ships, who mysteriously managed to get foreign exchange from the Central Government.

During 1960-65, innumerable industries came up in West Pakistan which were totally dependent on imported raw materials. But East Pakistan was all through denied foreign exchange for the import of necessary raw mate-

rials, Huq pointed out. He presented an account of foreign-exchange earnings through Pakistan's exports during the 20-year period, from 1947-48 to 1967-68, the total of which stood at Rs 3,795 crores. Out of this figure, East Pakistan had earned as much as Rs 2,144 crores. The share of the eastern wing in the imports from abroad, however, was the paltry sum of Rs 1,591 crores, while West Pakistan during this period was allowed total imports from foreign countries worth Rs 3,603 crores. Besides, East Pakistan was carrying the lion's share of the burden of foreign credits on its shoulders.

The tragedy is, that almost all major private industries of East Pakistan are in the clutches of West Pakistani industrialists enabling them to exploit the poor masses to the furthest limit possible. The Ayub regime has made East Pakistan a happy hunting ground for the big industrialists, whereas the poor masses, the real builders of the nation, are forced to enjoy the bitter taste of denial and deprivation.

A few conspicuous examples of these tycoons' performances are also available; Adamjis, the big shot in Pakistani jute industry and trade, earned a profit of Rs 1.7 crores in 1965-66. The Habibs of the banking industry grabbed Rs 1.2 crores, and in the thread mill industry, the same business house gathered another Rs 21 lakhs.

Health

Due to East Pakistan's climatic conditions, the people suffer from diseases like cholera, malaria, small-pox and are often the victims of natural calamities like flood and cyclone. On this score, too, the Government has done little to alleviate the sufferings of the poor. According to the information furnished by the Health Minister in the National Assembly, 1,146 persons died of small-pox and 599 of cholera in East Pakistan, during the period of 1967 to May 1968. Number of deaths in West Pakistan during the same period was 57 in cholera and 1,271 in small-pox. Cancer took

a toll of 835 persons in East Pakistan and 317 in West Pakistan during 1964. No figures on this count are available for the period since 1964.

The utter failure in East Pakistan's village health centre programmes was exposed by the Independent member Hammad Ali. According to him, as against the minimum requirement of at least one hospital for a thousand persons and one doctor for 3,000 patients, there was only one hospital to serve 8,000 patients and one doctor for 9,000 patients. The most shocking fact in this regard is that 18 lakh people in East Pakistan have been suffering from T. B. according to Government's own statistics. It was further stated that the number of T. B. hospitals and sanatoria in East Pakistan was 14 and 19 respectively. There are 619 nurses (with 45 male) in East Pakistan and 4,290 (with 299 male) in West Pakistan.

Education

East Pakistan's education clearly bear the stamp of Ayub's discriminatory rule. According to an Opposition leader, there are 90 lakh children in East Pakistan who are denied facilities of primary education. The last ten years, which have been pompously publicised as "Decade of Reforms" by the Pakistan Government, have seen the curse of illiteracy on the students of East Pakistan through discriminatory measures. Before 1958, there were 26,000 primary schools in East Pakistan and today this has gone up to only 29,000. But in the case of West Pakistan, the rise has been from 10,000 to 32,000 during the same period.

In the years between 1966-1968, discrimination was shown by the Central Government with regard to financial aid to Model Schools of Islamabad and Dacca. According to the information placed by the Education Minister in the National Assembly, an amount of Rs 10.1 lakhs was granted to Islamabad Boys' Model Schools in 1966-67. Government also made a grant for Rs 4.5 lakhs to Residential Model Schools in Islamabad during the

year of 1966-67. In 1967-68, a grant of Rs 6.7 lakhs was made to Boys' Model Schools of Islamabad by the Government. For Girls' Model Schools of Islamabad, an amount of Rs. 5.5 lakhs was sanctioned.

But, in the case of East Pakistan, the Central Government granted only Rs 4 lakhs to the Model Schools of Dacca during the years of 1966-67 and 1967-68.

Ayub's discriminatory rule has many other features. Water is available to the people of Dacca at the rate of Rs 2 per thousand gallons, whereas the same quantity is supplied to West Pakistan towns at the rate of 50 paise only.

Employment

Government's partisan policy in appointments to the various administrative departments and major commercial and industrial sectors, was subjected to a sharp criticism from the Opposition. In the National Assembly, Afaquddin agitatedly asked the Central Commerce Minister, whether the West Pakistanis were born with a special training to be entitled to most of the Government jobs! Distressing instances of unjustifiable favours extended to West Pakistanis, were brought to light. Of the 1,520 persons employed by the Pakistan's Development Directorate, only 116 belong to East Pakistan. Of these 1,520, there are 93 Class I officers, among whom East Pakistanis number seven only. Of the 119 Class II Gazetted Officers, only four are East Pakistanis. Class III employees number 1046, but only 93 belong to East Pakistan; and in Class IV, out of 304 employees, only 11 are from East Pakistan.

In the Gas and Oil Development Corporation, there are 35.3 per cent officers and 30 per cent employees belonging to East Pakistan and 64.2 per cent officers and 70 per cent employees are from West Pakistan.

Khawaja Shahabuddin, the senior-most member of the Pakistan Cabinet and an East Pakistani himself, has admitted in the National Assembly that East Pakistanis have not been given their due share in the Government set-up. Most start-

ling revelation, however, has been that during the last 20 years, no East Pakistani has been appointed to be the Director General of Pakistan Radio. According to the information given by the Minister, less than 40 per cent of the Government officers belong to the eastern wing. While the representation of East Pakistanis in the administrative service is 41 per cent, in Military Accounts Service the percentage is as low as 27.

Following are the figures given by him in the National Assembly:

Service	East Pak- istan	West Pak- istan	Total	Per- centage of E. Pak- istan
Administrative Service	228	326	554	41
Foreign Service	73	104	177	41
Police	82	128	210	39
Income Tax	86	141	227	37
Central Excise	40	76	116	34
Railways	20	36	56	35
Audit & Accounts	44	95	139	31.6
Military Accounts	18	50	68	27
Central Information Service	19	49	68	27.4

Significantly, Khawaja Shahabuddin did not give the percentage of East Pakistan in the Defence Services.

The Opposition members also charged the Government of deliberately closing the doors of the armed forces on the East Pakistanis. According to one member, there is practically no one from East Pakistan in the higher ranks of the Army, Navy and Air Force. The Government, has not contradicted this statement.

There has been a steep rise in differences in per-capita income during the last few years, which has risen to Rs 150 in 1967 from Rs. 88 in 1959-60. The break-up is given below:

Year	East Pak- istan	West Pak- istan
1959-60	278	366
1960-61	286	374
1961-62	294	387
1962-63	285	405
1963-64	308	419
1964-65	309	439
1965-66	309	457
1966-67	313	463

It is in this background that the demand for autonomy has been gaining momentum and despite the lack of cooperation and unity among the Opposition parties, in every corner of Pakistan protest against the Ayub misrule is welling up. According to a Kabul Radio report, Pakhtoons also have intensified their struggle for freedom against the Pakistan Government in Dir, Jandul, Maidan, Darra, Sultan-khel and Pindakhel areas. The Radio reported that in an encounter between a strong party

of Baluchi Pakhtoons and a Pakistani army vehicle, the Baluchi nationalists captured the entire consignment of arms and ammunition and killed a number of Pakistani soldiers. The broadcast claimed that the recent encounters lent support to the contention that the freedom fighters in Pakhtoonistan would soon emerge victorious and achieve their national and cherished goal of independence.

The Radio said that even pro-Government papers in Pakistan were forced to publish "painfully and reluctantly" the truth regarding the Pakhtoon independence movement. These papers had confessed that the "attendance at Pakhtoon public meeting was never less than 40,000 or 50,000. The slogan *Pakhtoonistan Zindabad* at these meetings must be reverberating in Islamabad," the Radio said.

The voice of anger is not confined inside Pakistan alone, it has been heard from the Pakistani citizens living abroad as well. Recent instance was the

demonstration outside President Ayub's London Hotel during his recent visit there. Demonstrators carried banners reading "No more Looting of East Pakistan", "Down With Ayub" and "No More Press Censorship". The students distributed pamphlets entitled "Black Power Rule" which gave a harrowing description of

the Ayub regime.

However, it is too early now to predict the final outcome of these struggles. But expectations remain high; the volcano of accumulated dissatisfaction could no longer be kept dormant.

It is, however, interesting to note in this context, President Ayub Khan has been crowned

with two new titles "Mohsin-e-Azam" (the great benefactor) and "Aman-e-Alam Bardar" (standard bearer of peace), before he left for Teheran on his way to London. The bitter sense of humour of the authors of these titles can be little appreciated by the millions in East Pakistan.

Capitalist Market and Public Sector

BALRAJ MEHTA

ON Tuesday last week there was a very interesting question in the Lok Sabha by Swatantra member D.N. Patodia. It related to a decision of the Madhya Pradesh Government which can by no means be classified as progressive and leftist committed to support of the public sector. Sri Patodia objected to the State Government reserving 12 products manufactured by departmentally-run or other Government-controlled industrial units for exclusive Government purchases without inviting tenders. He alleged that this was discrimination against the private manufacturers of the same products.

It was surprising to find that in the face of such a slanted question by the Swatantra member, Industrial Development Minister Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed should have taken an extremely defensive stand which almost amounted to an admission that the Madhya Pradesh Government was not doing the correct thing. It was left to private members in the House, among them Sri T. Viswanatham from Andhra, to set the focus right by sharply asking why Government-run units should not receive preferential treatment in the matter of Government's own purchases unless,

of course, these units had been set up not to make good but only to oblige and service the needs of the private sector.

The question really raised a vital issue of policy and practice of the Government towards the public sector and its growth. Further enquiries showed that Sri Patodia's was not just an individual member's complaint. He was only bringing into the open persistent pressure being worked up by the organised private sector on the issue of the prices and purchases policy of the Government in regard to public sector products. The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry has been in communication with the Government in this connection and has made similar complaints of "discrimination." The issue was considered so important that it has been discussed at the Economic Secretaries and Cabinet levels. The result has been a directive by the Union Government that "discriminatory" practices should be given up. The Union Government has in particular objected to preference being shown by the State Governments for local products as something against "national integration." It would appear that the slogan of "national

integration" is to be seized upon for all kinds of things and not merely to interfere with freedom of the press.

While such is the solicitude of the Government for the sensitivity of the private sector to any "discrimination" in favour of either local products or public sector products even for its own purchases, what the public sector is being made to reckon with when it enters the market with its goods appears to have received no attention from the authorities. Indeed, the market mechanism is being used ruthlessly by the private sector in exercise of its dominant position in the economy to drive the public sector to the wall.

Former MP and Secretary of the Congress Parliamentary Party Raghunath Singh is not known to be a particular friend of the public sector. But he is at present Chairman of Hindustan Zinc Ltd., a public sector enterprise in a field in which India has so far been totally dependent on imports for this important non-ferrous metal. This undertaking has registered impressive progress since its take-over in the public sector and is now producing zinc above its rated capacity, besides producing superphosphates in large quanti-

ties as a byproduct. But having done all that, even Sri Raghunath Singh has been driven to desperation by the resistance to the purchase of his products.

Both zinc and superphosphatic fertilizers are scarce commodities and have to be imported at heavy cost in foreign exchange. While speeches by the Ministers calling for reducing such dependence on imports are plentiful, the production of Hindustan Zinc Ltd. has to be stockpiled to a point where production itself cannot be maintained. Its stocks are not being lifted either by the Government purchase agencies or by private sector users.

According to Sri Raghunath Singh himself, Hindustan Zinc is in a position to supply 38,000 tonnes of zinc against the total consumption demand of 65,000 tonnes in the country. While so much is heard about foreign exchange stringency, the Commerce and Finance Ministries have merrily imported so far 55,000 tonnes for this year's consumption and are arranging further imports.

The manner in which users of zinc in both public and private sectors reject the indigenous product is itself an interesting story. The Rourkela steel plant has found it too pure for its galvanising lines. Union Carbide does not want it for the production of its batteries

because it is not pure enough. Similar excuses have been used to reject it in the P & T and Defence sectors. When Sri Raghunath Singh was asked about the reasons advanced for such rejection, his angry remark was that they were spurious. The real problem was the inability of the public sector to offer the right kind of "special incentives" to the right quarters which private sector can freely give, to secure orders, he said. He quoted in this connection the example of the UP Government's rejection of superphosphatic fertilizers from his undertaking on the ground of "quality" even when its purchasing agency had not cared to take a single sample and even when it was being offered at a much lower price than that being paid by the UP Government to private suppliers. And yet the private sector is making the fantastic charge of "discrimination" in Government purchases. In fact, the boot is on the other foot, and this is not merely in the case of zinc and superphosphates from Hindustan Zinc Ltd.

The further expansion of the Durgapur alloy steel plant which the Cabinet had sanctioned a long time ago is in the process of being scuttled in the name of lack of demand. The interesting point about it is that while expansion of the public sector plant, for which large investments were made in the first stage itself, is being delayed, licences have been issued to private parties, including two to Birlas, to set up alloy steel plants. How exactly the private plants will find market which will not be available to the public sector is, of course, kept a mystery. Equally painful has been the story of the sale of coal produced by the National Coal Development Corporation and the non-utilization of its established capacity. At the time of the crisis created by the private collieries over the rate war last year, the Railways and other users found it quite convenient to switch over to NCDC coal. But as soon as the price question was settled, they left the NCDC again in the lurch in the name of quality and similar other excuses

and switched back to the private suppliers. It is revealing that even departmentally-run organisations insist on receiving NCDC coal through private middlemen because that gives sufficient elbow-room for manipulation of commission on that account. The element of commission and its manipulation among interested quarters cannot remain in the event of the NCDC making direct supplies. There are many more examples to show that "discrimination" is in fact against the public sector in the market rather than the other way round.

The time has come when this invidious market mechanism established and controlled by capitalist norms and practices should be squarely faced and the disadvantages of public sector enterprise having to operate in such conditions should be eliminated. It is not enough to constantly keep up a din about the inefficiency and unprofitability of public sector investments and enterprise without going into the problems of this sector and without creating the conditions absolutely necessary for its proper working.

The problem is not merely of management in the running of these enterprises for better production. That itself requires a major overhaul in which the key question is that of ending the bureaucratic stranglehold on these enterprises. But at the same time, bold steps will have to be taken to streamline the marketing conditions to suit and sustain the public sector by breaking the capitalistic stranglehold on market operations. It will be necessary, to this end, to develop an aggressive sales organisation for each of the public sector enterprises, on the one side, and for the Government to take firm steps to oblige all users to extend preferential treatment to products of the public sector. To begin with, liberal import of all such items as can be supplied by the public sector must stop and all Government departments and public sector undertakings must be made to accept the available public sector supplies at proper prices.

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The River Knew Korba

HABIB TANVIR

No one can stop the wheels of time. They are on the move even in the darkest jungles. Go to Korba and you see the word 'change' writ large everywhere. Change has already been noticeably wrought in this wood-laden area, known for hundreds of years as the rice-bowl of India. Rich till yesterday only in greenery and beasts, colourful tribal folklore and abundant agricultural produce, today Korba is rising to meet industrial advance on a scale undreamt of before.

The ancient woods certainly knew what rich treasures, what vital instruments of transformation lay buried for centuries in the bowels of mother earth here underneath the calm green exterior of the rice fields. But they remained unruffled. The river Hasdeo shared the secret, but it flowed by unconcerned. The people kept on singing of beasts and birds, harvests and festivals, hunting and sowing, little suspecting what new songs still remained unlocked in their water and soil.

And now they have all risen to the occasion—the earth, water and the people—to greet the new age, heralded by the hum of machines. More change, and still more change to come is in the air. Many projects are already started and more are in the offing. Coal, bauxite, steam and power have all joined hands to bring about the long-awaited transformation of the land and its people.

Korba, previously a sequestered corner in the district of Bilaspur in Chhattisgarh, east of Madhya Pradesh, is buzzing like a bee-hive with new activity. The peasant has always been there,

but now under the shadow and the smoke-screen of tall chimneys and in the thunder of mechanised coal-mines and power-house turbines, a new class of industrial workers is fast emerging to become the proud possession of Korba.

At the base of the industrial progress here stand the ancient woods and forests underneath the layers of earth that were being petrified for millions of years into power-producing coal. And the river Hasdeo, daily carrying hundreds of gallons of power-producing water, held the lever of industrialisation.

After getting down at Champa on the main railway line running between Bombay and Calcutta, you take a train to Korba, a distance of 35 miles. As you travel along this lane, newly constructed for the special needs of the numerous upcoming Korba projects, you first come across the open chests of black diamond—to use the metaphor attributed to coal—that are hacked and shoved across with the aid of enormous shovels and dumpers in the Soviet-aided mechanised opencast coal-mine of Manikpur. In Korba proper itself, you see two pairs of underground coal-mines. A few miles away is the National Coal Development Corporation Colony, peopled by young technicians and workers. Here you notice a huge Soviet-aided factory, known as the Central Electrical and Mechanical Workshop. Small machine-tools, spare parts and non-standard equipment are made here, and repairs done to mining machines like shovels, dumpers, and other coal-handling equipments.

You go ahead a few more

miles and you approach the colony that belongs to the Madhya Pradesh Electricity Board. Here, the slim, tall, silvery chimney of the Soviet-aided 200 MW Korba Thermal Power Station stands against the blue sky as a proud symbol of power for the entire State of Madhya Pradesh. Some distance further away from the turbines and the forest of lightning arresters that surround the Power Station like jealous sentinels, the river Hasdeo, the boon-giver of Korba, quietly flows its age-old course, without the slightest hint of awareness of what it has done to change the destiny of a people.

All around, penetrating through the thickets of trees that still crowd the plains of Korba, can be seen pucca tar roads gleaming under the cloudy sky of this season. Clearings have been made everywhere in the forest to accommodate the various projects, with their numerous upcoming civilian colonies and townships, their shopping centres, cinemas, playing grounds, clubs and schools. Threading through these roads now and again can be seen various vehicles—school buses, public buses, jeeps, cycles, station wagons, motor cars, man-pulled rickshaws, and lines of pedestrians. They are not to be seen all together. Space seems to stretch before you without a break for miles, ruled by long spells of stillness, characteristic of any forest-covered rural area, that remains unanimated for minutes except by the flight of an occasional bird. You are lost in the reverie of the past, whose picture the scene reflects. Just then you sight a stream of bicycles, a bus or a

jeep, disturbing the agrarian peace, and you begin to visualise the industrial future, when these open spaces will become the hub of endless traffic.

Nor is this the end of what already exists by way of foundations laid for development. A couple of miles away from the two power stations—a 90 MW power house stands a few furlongs from the Soviet-aided project—a new road is being constructed, a new pipeline laid, and interviews of young graduates seeking employment are going on in a building, in which some design engineers are already busy working at their desks; and all this is for the new Korba Aluminium Project, which is soon to come up with Hungarian and Soviet assistance.

The other bank of Hasdeo, about eight miles from Korba, is not so quiet either. It is alive with the din of work going on all the time in the fully-mechanised Soviet-aided underground coal-mines of Banki and Surakachhar—one a few miles away from the other.

Then there is a fertiliser plant,

which is being considered to be erected, a caustic soda plant in the offing, and many small ancillary industries under plan. Envisioning the change that is to sweep Korba in a few years, the Madhya Pradesh State Government has already formed a high-power committee for the development of Korba, of which Sri M.K.R. Menon, Deputy Chief Engineer MPEB, is a member.

Sri Menon was in rhapsodies over his vision of the future of Korba. This district of Bilaspur, he said, produces more rice than any other part of India. Even in the worst phase of the recent draught-stricken years, cheapest and the most abundant rice was available here, Sri Menon said. Korba has this advantage, which will keep attracting the future engineers, workers and citizens of the industrial complex that is to develop here within about a decade.

"Secondly, we have coal here, and water and power—the three basic requisites for industrial growth. Thirdly, consider the insular position of Korba from

the point of view of any possible foreign attack. Its deep, well-protected, inland position spells security. Lastly, the climatic conditions here are so good. It is pleasant throughout the year except two hot months. Korba receives 48 inches of rain during this season. From now on it will remain beautiful right upto the end of April. The future dwellers of this promising city-to-be will find all this a great attraction. In ten to fifteen years, this richest agricultural area will also become one of the most prosperous industrial areas of the country", Sri Menon said.

As I took leave of him at the end of our conversation to go back to my room in the rest house, a cool breeze that had lifted after a heavy shower was singing dithyrambic songs, echoing the symphony of turbines that raged inside the concrete edifice of the 200 MW Power Station—symbol of peace and the basis of all development and the promising future of Korba.

A SOVIET ASSESSMENT

China at the Cross-Roads—II

F. BURLATSKY

III

FORMS AND METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION

FROM the very outset the leaders of the People's Republic of China have been exerting feverish efforts to sharply reduce the time for the socialization of property in town and countryside. Indeed, whereas almost 20 years were needed for the socialization of industry and agriculture in the Soviet Union, slightly over five years were enough for China.

The expropriation of large estates and the distribution of land owned by landlords to peasants

covered the period between 1917 and 1920 in our country and between 1950 and 1953 in China. After 1920 for about eight years our country carried through the New Economic Policy, which affected, above all, the countryside. China did not know such a policy in the countryside and immediately set about collectivization. The setting up of collective farms took about seven years in the Soviet Union, and two years in China: it was followed by "communization," which was effected in a few months.

In the Soviet Union the period of industrialization took approximately 15 years; in China an attempt was made to overcome this historical boundary in some 10 years, though the initial positions were much less favourable. The "great leap forward" and the

This is the second and concluding part of an article which appeared in the Soviet journal, Mirovaya Ekonomika i Mezhdynarodnye Otnosheniya, No 6, 1968.

"people's communes" were therefore a continuation and deepening of the policy of the hasty and spasmodic "jerk forward" towards socialism, which already had been outlined soon after the victory of the people's revolution in China. And all this in conditions when it was fully possible to take into consideration the experience of other socialist countries and to rely on their support.

Meanwhile nationalizing private property just in that country, it was imperative to consider the social consequences of this action. China had long-standing traditions of development of state property in conditions of feudal society. The emergence of China's modern industry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was linked exactly with the development of state capitalism, and the first enterprises were owned and managed by the state. It was not without reason that the Chiang Kai-shek government, far from seeking to destroy this tradition, on the contrary, facilitated its strengthening. In his book *China's Destiny* Chiang Kai-shek upheld, specifically, the idea of development of the state economy.

However, nationalizing property, the leaders of the CPC least of all considered the social consequences of this action. Carried away by the idea of total nationalization of all and sundry—big and small industry in towns, trade, handicrafts, landed property, and even, in the long run, forks and spoons—they believed that the fact of nationalization in itself automatically produces the necessary social results: ensures not only liquidation of the exploiters, but also greater efficiency of social production. It is easily imagined how great was their disappointment when "communization" led to a reduction and not a rise in farm production. By the way, judging from everything, the Maoists have not yet understood what happened, and continue following their prejudices and illusions.

Meanwhile, even a most elementary analysis shows that state property in China must still be raised to the level of consistent socialist property. Of course, the victory of state property in towns and co-operative in villages has been a highly important social achievement of the Chinese people. It was necessary to advance from this important position to the triumph of genuinely socialist relations in the sphere of production on the basis of raising the cultural level of the masses and drawing them into management. But this was not done. On the contrary, the policy of "communization" carried the negative aspects of nationalization to scandalous forms of self-exposure. This also largely refers to state factories and mills. Even at the best of times when trade unions existed and functioned, it was difficult to detect any effective forms of participation of workers in management or even in control of enterprises. The masses were not really drawn into management of property or control either in "people's communes" or in industrial enterprises.

It is more difficult to assess the question of a rise in efficiency of production after its socialization. Judging by the average 20 percent growth in China's industry in the first 7-8 years of people's power, it can be considered that a comparatively big advance

was made from pre-revolutionary positions. A sharp decline resulted from the policy of the "great leap forward". As for agriculture, this question was more intricate since the position was strongly aggravated by inadequate preparations for producers' co-operatives and subsequent "communization," which led to a tremendous waste of forces of production.

A rise in living standards is one of the most important purposes of the socialization of production. In the first few years of people's power, according to unbiased researchers, there really was a more or less substantial rise in real incomes of workers, and, especially, of peasants. This state of affairs, however, changed in the late fifties and early sixties, when social production sharply declined. At that time, there was a steep reduction in wages, the real purchasing capacity of money and peasants' incomes. A certain improvement was possible in the period of "readjustment". However, the "cultural revolution" campaign, which followed soon, again struck a telling blow on the living standards of the people.

In other words, state property in industry and co-operative property in the countryside are not yet genuinely socialist in contemporary China. To achieve this, it is necessary to solve the highly important problems of drawing the masses into management of property, raising the efficiency of social production and subordinating the purposes of the economy to the interests of the working man. All this is linked with the nature of power in China.

Marx and Engels pointed out that mere nationalization of private property in itself does not spell socialism, but only creates major pre-conditions for its victory. In our time the experience of many countries has shown that nationalization of implements and means of production, notwithstanding the entire historic progressiveness of this process, is by no means always socialist in nature. Nationalization in such countries as Britain, Italy, or France, where it is of a state-monopoly nature and linked with a high level of development of productive forces, is one thing. Quite a different thing is the advance of state property in developing countries of Africa and Asia, where this process is objectively linked with a desire to overcome extreme economic backwardness. However, nationalization of private property leads to socialism only if it is used in the interests of the mass of the working people, which can be achieved only by changing the nature of power as a result of the struggle of the working class, the toiling peasantry, all progressive forces of society, and a radical rise in the level of productive forces.

Hence, state and socialist property are identical in some conditions (where power of the working people and distribution according to work are, in fact, guaranteed), while in others (where power is in the hands of the national bourgeoisie, the middle classes or other non-proletarian sections of the population) state property can be the foundation of non-socialist relations of production.

At the same time it must be emphasized that construction of socialism, including the conversion of state into socialist property, is a more or less

protracted process which is taking a different course in various countries and in various conditions. In the Soviet Union, for instance, the victory of social property in towns was gained already in the early twenties, and in the countryside—in the early thirties, which spelled the building of the foundations of socialism; in the mid-fifties, after the rehabilitation of the war-devastated economy, after another big advance in all spheres of economic and political life, the country entered into a period of further building a developed socialist society and the gradual transition to communism. In the European socialist countries (at least, in most of them) the victory of social property in towns was gained already in the early fifties, and in the countryside—at the end of that decade; the task of transition to a developed socialist society was set there only in recent years. Thus, at least two main stages are typical for all European socialist countries, including the Soviet Union: the building of the foundations of socialism and the building of a developed socialist society. However, inside these stages there also are periods and spells of development.

The process of building socialism in such countries as China, which in the past were markedly lagging behind in economic and social development, is highly intricate and requires many stages. A question of principle arises in connection with the analysis of China's experience. Should the transitional period in such countries begin directly with the building of the foundations of socialism? Should this not be preceded by another preparatory stage? And if so, what stage?

Lenin wrote in his time: ".....it is easier to begin for a backward country, because its enemy is rotten, its bourgeoisie is unorganized, but to carry on it needs one hundred thousand times more circumspection, caution and tenacity". The "gap between the greatness of the set tasks and the poverty, not only material, but also cultural", which Lenin noted, speaking about Russia, was particularly wide, precisely in China.

A more or less long-term policy of strengthening the state sector in industry, gradual co-operation of the village by stages, use of private enterprise to the necessary limit and encouragement of the development of state capitalism with the constant and steady transformation of the economy along socialist lines in conformity with the attained level of economic and social development—such a policy would, evidently, be more in keeping with China's requirements. Some of the leaders of the Communist Party of China, judging by everything, understood this, while the Mao Tse-tung group was trying all the time to "speed up" the transitional period, took to the road of artificially and sharply reducing the distance between the beginning of the revolution and the building of socialism, even in comparison with developed socialist countries.

What resources did Mao Tse-tung and his supporters count on to speed up industrialization and to "leap" into communism? What were their hopes when they began weakening China's economic ties with the USSR and the other socialist countries? They pinned their hopes on the population of many

millions, they expected to industrialize the country not through the introduction of techniques, the application of a flexible system of stimulating production, but through ruthless exploitation of the manual labour of hundreds of millions of peasants with minimum payment. The idea of the "people's communes" was thus mixed up with the policy of the "great leap forward", through them they expected to set up militarized labour armies, which could be switched to any jobs: today, to build irrigation facilities, tomorrow, to build backyard furnaces, roads, etc.

Having included the "communes" in the system of state administration of a para-military type, the leaders of the Communist Party of China staged an experiment without precedent in history to implement a rigid social Utopia.

IV

FORMATION OF MILITARY-BUREAUCRATIC DICTATORSHIP

WHAT is the social structure of present-day China? As stated above, the overwhelming majority of the population are peasants, practically fully co-operated and living in conditions, which still bear the imprint of "communes". The proportion of the working-class in the population has even declined since 1958.

Transformations, not yet matured inside society, were wilfully and hastily thrust upon it, with a resulting deformation of China's social structure. For the level of per capita production, China lags behind developed countries by a whole historic epoch. China's social structure, side by side with definite socialist achievement, gravitates towards state bureaucratic relations, especially in the countryside.

What are the causes of such deformations? The answer to this question leads us to the political system of contemporary China. In such a country as China, where the peasant population prevails, it should have played a great role in the revolution and in socialist construction. The question of alliance between the working class and the peasantry was and still is the vital question of the policy of the Communist Party here. But the peasantry cannot be the leading revolutionary force, able to effect the political guidance of society. Of exceptional importance in these conditions is the consistent and firm pursuit of a socialist policy, the ability of the Party leaders to withstand pressure from petty-bourgeois elements, and an undeviating line towards raising the role of the working class in the Communist Party and in the state.

The Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of China (1956) noted that "the petty bourgeoisie constituted a majority (in the country). The mood of this class exerts a constant influence and pressure on us." However, Mao Tse-tung and his group tried hard to prevent an improvement in the social composition of the Party, retarded the drawing of workers into the Party. This is borne out by the fact that workers accounted for 10 percent of Party membership in 1948, 14 percent in 1956, and 13.4 percent 1957.

In the last two decades Party membership increased almost seven-fold, to 20 million. Such a rapid growth in Party membership of the Communist Party of China of course, could not be attended by a corresponding rise in its ideological and political level and training.

Almost half the members joined the Party in the period the "great leap forward". Figures on the composition of the Party after 1961 make it possible to draw the conclusion that the majority of Party members came to the fore in the period of the "great leap forward", the "cultural revolution", the growing anti-sovietism in the policy of the leadership of the Communist Party of China or shortly before it.

All or almost all the three million Communists, who had joined the Party before the victory of the people's revolution, passed through a more or less prolonged school of revolutionary struggle, took part in battles against alien invaders and Kuomintang troops. The other 17 million lack or almost lack such an experience. It is difficult to believe that this mass has been entirely permeated with revolutionary ideas. Rather the opposite can be supposed, that it carried a new spirit, which increasingly became dominating in the Party. What spirit is this? Above all, blind worship of Mao Tse-tung, his petty-bourgeois thoughts, instructions and directions. Don't the Maoists rely on them in the struggle against the old Party cadres?

The social composition of the leading bodies of the Communist Party of China also explains (at least, partly) why the Mao Tse-tung group, far from combatting the petty-bourgeois tendencies in the Party, on the contrary, sought to justify and encourage their development, facilitated their strengthening. Fifty-five members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China come from the countryside, only seven of the 97 members of the Central Committee are workers by birth. However, what was inevitable in the first stages for a Communist Party in a peasant country, could have been remedied in the further moulding of its leading bodies. But this was not done. Is it surprising that many Chinese leaders carried into the Party, as they themselves said at that time, "a long petty-bourgeois tail" and were affected by the most diverse non-proletarian influences?

The social origin of the members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China still further aggravates this unfavourable picture, typical as it is for the Central Committee and the Party as a whole. Only three out of the 31 members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee are of working-class origin, 17 come from classes that were privileged in the past. Of course, the transition of those coming from other classes to the positions of the proletariat and the mass of the working people is not infrequent; but are there not far too many of them in the Communist Party of China, which lays claim to being "the most revolutionary proletarian party" in the world?

It must be added that not only the Communist Party, but also other parts of the political machinery

of China have long been suffering from the regime of personal power and curtailment of democracy.

It is common knowledge that the dictatorship of the proletariat or the dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry presupposes the existence of a Communist Party and a broad machinery through which the working class exerts a leading influence on the entire life of society. This machinery includes representative agencies of power, where the decisive role belongs to the working class, the trade unions, operating democratically and playing a big part in economic management. Socialist democracy presupposes broad development of working class, peasant representation.

In contemporary China representative bodies have been meeting most irregularly and their role is, essentially, formal. Under the Party Rules, adopted in 1956, the powers of the Central Committee expire after five years; sessions of the Party Congress must be convened annually, and plenary sessions of the Central Committee not less than twice each year. However 12 years have passed since the Eighth Congress and the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) has not yet been held. Only one session of the Congress, the second session of the Eighth Congress of the CPC took place (May 1958).

Lenin regarded accountability of leading officials to the masses as a distinguishing feature of the socialist state. In China, this principle is utterly ignored. The leadership in the Party, state and trade union organizations is now being replaced in China. However, there is no trace of the elective principle: some "objectionable" leaders are just being dismissed and replaced by others. The only demand presented to them is loyalty to Mao Tse-tung.

As socialism is being built successfully and the exploiting classes are being liquidated, Leninism calls for a gradual change in the duties of agencies, discharging the functions of class suppression, for their transformation, spearheading them increasingly against imperialism and its agents. In China, on the other hand, the security agencies still further extended their functions after the socialization of property in town and countryside. Now they are openly used to subordinate the people to the adventurist purposes of the Mao group.

The regime of personal power which is a threat to the socialist gains of the country, took shape long before the "cultural revolution" in the People's Republic of China. China's political system was marked, firstly, by excessive concentration of personal passivity and obedience of the masses; secondly, by violation and flouting of democratic standards in the activity of Party and state agencies; thirdly, by the introduction of red tape, administration by mere injunction and arbitrariness in solving economic and social problems. Now we witness the brutal manifestation of all negative aspects of such a regime in the course of the "cultural revolution", when Mao Tse-tung took to the road of direct military dictatorship.

All main political institutes, which retarded the process of sliding into personal dictatorship, have

now virtually ceased to function in China. Advancing the slogan "seizure of power", the Maoists dissolved many Party committees, leading bodies of the Young Communist League, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions and its branches. Next, they began seizing the leadership in central and local press organs, in provincial agencies of power. Two thirds of the members of the CPC Central Committee, elected by the Eighth Congress of the CPC, were disgraced and removed from practical activity. Eight of the 12 members of the secretariat and two of the three alternate members of the secretariat of the CPC Central Committee were declared to be "black gangsters", over half the members and alternates of the Political Bureau are also called "enemies of Chairman Mao's Thoughts" and baited. Eight out of nine former Marshals were also disgraced.

The establishment of "Military control" over Party and state agencies, and later, also over economic organizations, was officially announced early in 1967. Judicial agencies were replaced by military justice, and Party and government agencies were placed under direct army control. Later when the Maoists in the process of manoeuvring had to proclaim the slogan of "uniting the forces of the three sides", that is, the army, the cadres, devoted to Mao Tse-tung, and the Red Guards ringleaders, the military nevertheless continued playing the decisive role in the newly set up "revolutionary committees" in the centre and in the provinces.

What do the new agencies of power, which the Maoists seek to implant, stand for? Above all, they are fully appointed-from-above illegal organizations, utterly deprived of any democratic principles. Next, they are organizations formed only on the basis of loyalty to Mao and his "Thoughts". Further, they are military-bureaucratic organizations, representing mainly the army and a proportion of the Party cadres, that accepted the "cultural revolution". Lastly, they are organizations of a compromise between inveterate Maoists and the hesitating part of the cadres; they were born as a result of the failure of Mao Tse-tung's attempts fully to give up support on former agencies of power and administration, on the Party and state machinery.

In social and political life, the setting up of "revolutionary committees" still further intensifies the trend towards divorcing power from the classes that engendered it, towards establishing a military-bureaucratic dictatorship, which is independent of class. We say, independent of class, because the policy of this power now contradicts even those sections of society (the peasantry), which were its main social support. Therein also lies the instability of such power. It will be subjected to most diverse fluctuations, especially in case of Mao's natural departure from the political arena.

The use of the army and Red Guards for smashing up Party committees, the YCL, trade unions, state administration agencies led some foreign observers to the conclusion that Mao Tse-tung resolved fully to liquidate the Party as an instrument

of power and to govern the country, relying exclusively on organs of the military dictatorship. But this conclusion has not been confirmed by facts. However, as could have been supposed earlier, too, the Mao Tse-tung group set itself the task fully to remove, rout and disperse the opposition forces inside the Party and in other political institutes. But it is hardly striving for the full liquidation of such an instrument of political leadership as the Party; the point is rather to change its nature and convert it into a support of the regime of personal power.

Of late, the foreign press has been publishing the text of a communication sent by the CPC Central Committee and the "cultural revolution affairs" group at the Central Committee to all "revolutionary committees", preparatory groups for setting up "revolutionary committees", military committees and mass organizations on preparation for convening the Ninth Congress of the CPC. It says that all organizations must report to Peking on their views, and also the "opinion of the masses", concerning preparation for the Congress, which is scheduled for the autumn of 1968, that the Congress will adopt a new programme and rules of the Party. The conclusion can be drawn from the text of this document that only supporters of Mao, and also those whom he chooses as a "negative example", as practised before in the CPC, can be appointed to be members of the new Party bodies and delegates to the Congress.

The new draft Rules of the CPC, published on January 9, this year, in the newspaper of a Peking college, emphasizes that the CPC is an organization, founded by Mao Tse-tung personally. He is proclaimed to be the "greatest leader of the proletariat" who needs authority for the "world-wide...struggle for general liberation". The draft proclaims the course for "consistent leaps in the development of the state economy," militarization of the Party, state affairs, and asserts that China has already "become the centre and basis of the world revolution". The draft is a pure and unvarnished concentration of "Mao's Thoughts". This ultimately brings out the main purpose of the "cultural revolution"—to suppress the opponents to personal dictatorship and to establish the absolute power of Mao Tse-tung and his hangers-on, to ensure full domination of Maoism in ideology and policy.

We shall not dwell here on an analysis of Maoism and its current political line. Let us recall in brief that Maoism means:

a) On the question of ways of building socialism in China, orientation on skipping over historically necessary stages of the economic and social process on the basis of wide use of the methods of violence, militarization of labour to speed up the rate of development; renunciation of many highly important socialist principles of economic management;

b) In politics, full abjuration of democracy and orientation on a regime of military-bureaucratic dictatorship, resting on backward sections of the population, poisoned by the ideology of the Mao cult;

c) In relations with Socialist countries and Communist Parties, orientation on splitting the socialist community and the world communist movement, implanting nationalism and anti-Sovietism and renunciation of the principles of internationalism;

d) In world politics, orientation on aggravation of international tension and provocation of conflicts, which is connected with implanting a psychology of "besieged fortress" inside China with the object of pursuing a nationalistic line and suppressing the opposition to Mao's course; an attempt to seize the leadership of the national-liberation movement and to counterpose it to the other anti-imperialist forces;

e) In theory, Maoism spells renunciation of the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism in favour of an ideology of peasant petty-bourgeois socialism and nationalism.

Of course, it is out of question that Mao Tse-tung and his entourage were able to create some complete philosophical and political trend. But past experience has shown that it is not at all necessary to create some perfect theories to exert substantial influence on the masses in this or that period.

At present Maoism is becoming the dominating ideology in a country with a population of 700 million. Nor shall we ignore that it exerts a certain influence on some elements and trends in the national-liberation movement. The point is that objective conditions exist within the national-liberation movement for the dissemination of the ideas of levelling socialism and nationalism of the Mao Tse-tung type. This soil is peasant revolutionism. We know that the peasantry is the biggest force in the national-liberation movement. The danger of Maoism as a theoretical and political movement is precisely linked with this. Particularly dangerous is the nationalism of the Maoists, which is projected outside, against the USSR and the other socialist countries, against the entire world communist movement.

What political and ideological line opposes Maoism in China? In other words, is there a real alternative to Mao Tse-tung's present course inside the CPC?

Dick Wilson, a leading British journalist and expert on Asian Affairs, the author of the book *A Quarter of Mankind: An Anatomy of Contemporary China*, asserts that the opposition in the CPC "is not an organized body with a pre-agreed alternative policy for China. True again, we know of its views only through the distorting mirror of its opponent, the Maoist-controlled press. For these reasons it might seem fanciful to construct an opposition 'platform', so to speak". This assertion seems to us far too categorical. Of course, we have no reasons to assert that the opponents of Mao Tse-tung uphold an opposite line. Nevertheless it is possible to speak definitely about an alternative policy on a wide range of questions, above all, in the economy, which was most fully and deeply expressed at the Eighth Congress of the CPC.

What conclusions can be drawn from the brief

survey of episodes of internal struggle within the frameworks of the CPC? Firstly, there is no doubt that Mao Tse-tung's adventuristic line throughout the entire post-revolutionary period clashed with a more realistic line, based on a study of the concrete conditions of socialist construction in China and the international experience of socialism. This latter offered a motivated and well-considered alternative policy, able to safeguard China's successful advance towards socialism.

Secondly, the ideological and political struggle inside the CPC and its leadership was aggravated as the tasks confronting the Party and the country became more intricate, as Mao Tse-tung tried harder to forcibly impose an adventuristic course, to implant the personality cult and the regime of personal power. The "cultural revolution" was the culmination point of this struggle, which was aggravated by the fact that Mao Tse-tung and his group were a minority in the CPC leadership and, probably, among Party cadres and broad sections of the intelligentsia. During this struggle political problems were most closely intermingled with problems of power and leadership.

Thirdly, the conditions of China furnished unobjective soil for both tendencies—the proletarian, drawing on Marxism-Leninism, scientific socialism, on the one hand; and peasant petty-bourgeois nationalism, on the other. These two tendencies were contained both in the nature of the revolution and in the nature of the political forces which accomplished it. More, it can be said that the soil for petty-bourgeois socialism and revolutionism inside the country was perhaps more favourable than for consistent proletarian socialism; the latter preponderated thanks to the alliance with the forces of international socialism. The Mao Tse-tung group needed the rupture of the actual contacts of the CPC with the other Communist and Workers' Parties, with the Socialist countries and the unfolding of political struggle against the USSR, against world Communism, as a whole, in order to create favourable conditions for the victory of the nationalistic and petty-bourgeois forces inside the CPC and the Chinese state, as a whole.

Fourthly, the Mao Tse-tung group, which used the army, the security agencies and the Red Guards to rout the Party, trade union and Young Communist League cadres, in an atmosphere of nationalistic fever was able to defeat its political opponents and to impose an adventuristic policy upon the country. However, the most unexpected turns in the internal struggle inside the CPC are still possible in the future, if we bear in mind that the forces, opposing this policy, are strong and significant enough, that their positions took shape and were sharpened in the course of a long period, that their alternative line accords with the objective conditions of China, the interests of the Chinese people, the cause of socialism in that country.

* * *

How could one define the nature of the social and political order in China, the stage in which the

country is at present? Big transformations, typical of the early period of socialist construction, were effected in previous stages of China's development: state property prevailed in towns and co-operative in villages. Objectively, the country faces major economic and socio-political reforms. It is confronted by the task of industrialization, China's conversion into an industrially developed power with predominance of the working class and scientific-technical intelligentsia in social structure, the task of making relations of production really socialist. In the political sphere, the country is confronted by the necessity of overcoming the regime of personal power and implementing democracy for the mass of the working people in the interests of the vic-

tory of socialism in the country.

However, these objective requirements of social development clash with the predominance of forces in the sphere of political power that represent bellicose petty-bourgeois nationalism. Solution of the contradictions between the country's objective requirements and the regime of personal power will be an agonizing period, marked by fiercest struggle. We must hope that in the long run it will be settled by a victory for those forces that uphold the country's advance along a socialist road. However, it is clear already now that this struggle will be rather protracted, that in the immediate historic period China's domestic and foreign policy will be marked by serious anti-socialist distortions.

Can A Country Have More Than One Communist Party?—VII

S. A. DANGE

XXI

100 One hundred and twenty years have passed since the Communist League under the leadership of Marx issued the famous Manifesto with the concluding slogan: "Workers of the World Unite."

They united and overthrew the rule of Capital in one-third of the world and brought half of humanity to live under socialism and freedom, guided by the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism and by Communist Parties owing allegiance to that philosophy.

101. The battle of these revolutionaries, through the long journey of over hundred years of history, involving the sacrifices of many millions of people was bound to raise controversies and differences. The General Staff of the world revolution, as represented collectively by all the Communist Parties of the world's working-class, has had to debate questions of ideology, of strategy and tactics, of the reading of the objective situation in the national and international arena and all the factors that are necessary for the successes of revolution, both in advance and retreat. As such we Communists have not been afraid of controversies and differences.

102. The mechanics of social revolutions now operating on a vast world scale, are particularly

difficult despite the existence of the unerring science of Marxism-Leninism; because, this science has to deal, not only with the material and objectively measurable productive forces but also with men's minds, emotions and spiritual-subjective behaviours arising on the basis of those material forces and their inter-relations. The atom of the uranium can be put in a machine, it can be split on command and its stupendous explosions measured mathematically by the scientist. But there is no crucible to melt and measure, as accurately and mathematically the mind of man's personality and its explosions, by the social scientist of Marxism-Leninism.

Marx discovered the laws of motion of capitalist society which was quite a new stage and a new phenomenon in human history of thousands of years. He also discovered the law and the forces, by which that stage, having fulfilled its mission of taking man to a higher level of life and thinking than the previous ones, would give place to a new stage, that of socialism and communism. The new class that was to be the instrument of this new history, this new revolution, was the working-class. And this class was to have equipped itself with a new organisation for fulfilling its historical task—that is the Communist Party.

In such a world-wide deep revolutionary process the actions of such *historically new men and minds* and their new organisational weapon, the Communist Party, could not come into existence and come to correct conclusions and behaviour without argument, discussion, differences, con-

This is the concluding instalment of Dange's thesis, the previous instalments of which appeared serially in Mainstream (June 1, July 6, 13, 20 and 27 and August 3, 1968.)

troversies. And the agreement on the road to revolution and successful construction of a new society, is bound to raise argument, firstly, because history does not provide ready-made laws for such a construction, and secondly, because the emergence of this new society, while inheriting all that is best in the previous phase also inherits certain unholy birth-marks of the womb of capitalist society, from which it is born. Hence not only Communist Parties in capitalist countries but also those in the Socialist societies are bound to suffer from differences and stand in need of world-wide discussion.

103. Through years of history and experience, ways and means have been found by the working-class, the vehicle of the new social revolution, to resolve the differences and improve its instruments of revolution. All the three Internationals and now the mechanism of the World Conferences, bilateral conferences, regional conferences, have all one aim and this is to perfect the ways and means of completing the world revolution.

In such a situation, when a Communist Party in one country or several Parties in several countries, differ on questions of ideology or methodology or even on the role of individuals, in a given phase of the revolution in its national or international context, the best way to solve the differences is *not by splittism but by discussion and unity* on the basis of the universal laws of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. And if a detachment of the revolution (the Party) is split, the verdict of the international brotherhood, meeting together and discussing the problems should be decisive and binding on all the dissidents and splitters and their opposites in the movement.

104. The very fact that the forces of production and exchange in modern society have bound the different regions and societies into *one world* the working-class has to think and act on the international scale of the whole world and so also its Communist Parties. The world proletariat and the world Communist movement, while donning different national costumes, speaking different languages, eating different foods and living in different cultures, has to stand on the common world platform of proletarian internationalism. And this internationalism does not conflict with or contradict the revolutionary nationalism of the working-class, in the sphere of its national behaviour, if it conforms to the sheet-anchor of Marxism-Leninism.

XXII

105 In recent days there has been a tendency to claim the independence of a Communist Party from the obligations of the internationalism to such an extent as to deny the very basic principle of internationalism. From the centralised Communist International, people have come to demand Polycentrism to such an extent as to introduce total anarchy in the unity of internationalism. This certainly has to be combated as a manifestation, not of healthy independence, equality or democracy but of sheer *petty bourgeois nationalist atomisation of a world unifying proletarian internationalism*.

106. No doubt this is partly a reaction to the dictates of a personality cult, which in some cases suppressed, by the use of sanctions of state power, even minor differences of opinion and behaviour. That the cult of personality is incompatible with democracy (whether bourgeois or socialist and more so in Communist thought) is a self-evident truth. That it arises out of certain objective and subjective forces in the development of the social revolution is also recognised. And basing themselves on this new experience Communist Parties the world over are combating the evil. But this combating must not lead to the denial of all authority of the international brotherhood or of giving not slightest weightage to historical experience of a given party.

XXIII

107 The purpose of these articles or notes has been to find a suitable organisational medium on a national and international scale to resolve the differences and unify the forces of world revolution. That medium cannot be anything but a World Congress of Communist Parties.

Such a Congress, after a democratic debate, must take a decision which all must *voluntarily accept as binding*. If it is contradicted by the experience of events following it, it should be reopened, re-discussed and revised.

108. At the conclusion of each Congress or Conference, there must be *some continuing mechanism*, not in the capacity of an executive or directing or interpreting authority as such but of a type which should be in a position to keep track of events, function as a recording centre and prepare for and call the next World Conference.

In the absence of such a "secretarian centre" we are faced with a situation, where the first question raised is: "Who is to call whom to a meeting and why and with what authority?"

A continuing world office is a necessity. It does not detract from the independence of parties nor does it revive the Communist International or the Cominform, because it has no power to issue a directive.

The World Congress should be the forum to assess the world situation, and national problems, settle differences and decide what is wrong or right.

109. When we emphasise that the world revolutionary process can be cognised and accomplished only through the science of Marxism-Leninism, we do so with the full knowledge that even inside the Communist ranks and some parties, a question is raised whether Marxism-Leninism retains its validity in this age of the new technological revolution, ushered in by nuclear energy, the new chemistry and computer-cybernetics. Question is

This thesis by S. A. Dange will be soon published in the form of a booklet. Those interested in getting copies may place their order with General Manager, Mainstream, F-24 Bhagot Singh Market, New Delhi-1.

also raised—if Marx could be creatively developed by Lenin, why not Lenin be further developed, say by Mao Tse-tung or someone else?

Of course, anyone can raise such questions. But that would not denote the assertion of democracy and independence on the part of a Communist Party which raises such questions. It would only indicate the independence an intellectual computer—gone wrong. Why do we say so? Do we say that Lenin is the last Pope to interpret Marx and no one else can issue a new encyclical? No that is not the point.

110. Lenin developed Marx, when after him, capitalism developed into monopoly capitalism, when it became state monopoly capitalism and the era of proletarian revolutions and building socialism actually began. That phase is not over and nothing much new has come up as to require the enunciation of additional laws of Marxism, which is what Lenin did in his days.

111. Some people think that ushering in of a new Third World does require a new and further creative development of Leninism, which is what Mao Tse-tung is doing. That is not true for the simple reason that *the Third World is not a new historical class category, a new mode of production in the world process*, as capitalism was formerly or socialism now is. Hence the claim to develop Marxism-Leninism further is a mere "pretension". That is why to establish what is a mere pretension as a new universal "scientific truth" recourse is had to the ideology of the cult and the vehement assertion of some Supreme Wisdom finding embodiment in one person. That is exactly metaphysics of the Avatar theory (Reincarnation and Revelation) and hence is not objective social science. So it cannot be called a further creative development of the science of Marxism-Leninism.

That new creative development will come only when the world revolution is completed and world humanity will have built its socialism on global scale. The law of motion of a fully developed world communist society and man may require further development of Marxism-Leninism.

XXIV

112 We should be concluding our subject with this. I am aware that some more questions such as the question of socialism and democracy or the question of the rise of cults even in socialist society are very much before the ranks of the Communist Parties the world over. Violations of socialist democracy or the rise of the cults is not the fault of individuals, great or small. They are perhaps inevitable aberrations in the development of the Communist movement and Socialist development in a world process where Imperialism is still a great menace and socialist industrialisation and industrial democracy have not had long-standing and stable roots, so as to let democracy become a habit as Lenin said.

113. The technological and socialist transformation that is now slowly taking place in the Socialist countries and the new call they put on the individual and society in his economic, ideological, political and personal relations and behaviour will do away

with those factors that give room to the cult and the violations of socialist democracy. But that is not the subject of this series, though we have to take that question more seriously in India.

Our country has not yet stepped out of the bondage of feudal ideology, of castes, religious sects, mahants and avatars. Where in a country any unbalanced idiot with a saffron colour can still move thousands by exciting inherited memories of myths and miracles, it is not difficult to rear a cult of the personality even inside a Communist Party, because even a Communist is not *totally* immune from the subjective influences of the environment of the general social milieu.

Hence, the struggle for democracy and against the cult inside the Indian Party will be far more difficult than anywhere else. *The Asiatic or oriental set-up provide the natural-historical ground for it and will do so even more after the revolution than today.* Hence a far deeper understanding of Marxism-Leninism is required on our part. Let us hope we shall succeed.

114. And for that there must be only one Communist Party of India, speaking and acting with one mind of Marxism-Leninism.

However, let those who split, and differ, from us, fire their "guns" at imperialism as the main enemy of the Indian people and not against us. But if their sighting is turned against us, we should not hesitate to answer back, even while pleading for sanity and unity—nationally and internationally.

(Concluded)

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Discussion

Mainstream has published a number of contributions discussing Régis Debray's views on revolution. The following article by the noted South African Marxist, Joe Slovo, may be of interest to Mainstream readers. It is reproduced from the quarterly, *The African Communist*, No 33, Second Quarter, 1968.

Debray and Latin America

JOE SLOVO

THE Passion which Régis Debray feels for the cause of the Latin American revolution cannot be questioned. The savage sentence of thirty years imposed upon him by the Bolivian regime came at the end of a trial in which he distinguished himself by a bearing in the best revolutionary traditions. Although his presence amongst Che Guevara's guerillas was in the capacity of a journalist, and not a guerilla fighter, he made not the slightest effort to disengage himself from the sort of revolutionary devotion and ardour which in the end cost Che his life.

He told the Tribunal:

"As a Revolutionary (to the extent to which I can be called one) I feel and I declare myself jointly responsible for all the 'crimes' committed by all revolutionaries everywhere in the world...

"Except for the mentally sick and the fascists, no one likes men to have to make history by killing. But if you want to talk about crimes, where are the innocent ones? ...

"Each one has to decide which side he is on—on the side of military violence or guerilla violence, on the side of violence that represses or violence that liberates... you chose certain ones and I chose others¹."

Nothing—no critique, no adverse assessment—should deflect any of us from the duty to press in every way possible for the liberty of Debray and the other freedom fighters who languish in the jails of Barrientos.

There is yet another reason it may be argued, why this is not the most propitious moment to sit back and reflect on Debray the theoretician. In part his presence in Bolivia appears to have been for the purpose of equipping himself more fully on the problem of the place of guerilla warfare in Latin American conditions. For the moment we are, regrettably, deprived of his further reflections and comments on the theoretical polemics which he has helped to spark off.

In the light of these factors ought we, even temporarily, to be deflected from subjecting the

tendencies evident in Debray's approach to the strictest scrutiny? Certainly not. Neither Debray nor any other serious revolutionary would countenance such a patronising approach. And the reason is crystal clear. Outside of a university seminar or a magazine polemic (though many so-called 'Lefts' and 'Revolutionaries' do their most intensive struggling at this level) the influence of theories of struggle, their adoption or rejection, is often literally a matter of life and death for thousands of militants or indeed a whole movement.

Debray himself alludes to this when he points to the fact that the undigested lessons of the Cuban experience

"gave rise to half a hundred revolutionary organisations on the margin of the Communist Party resolved on direct action. Several years of revolutionary action have now made it clear that heroism is not enough, and that ideological maturity and above all, political sense, absence of sectarianism and seriousness in preparing armed struggle were lacking. ... Prisoners of the Cuban model, these so-called Fidelista organisations perished"

There is yet another reason why we must be hard taskmasters. Whether intended by Debray or not, his texts are projected in many quarters, not as a tentative commentary or as food for thought (which some of his propositions are), but as an authoritative formulation of the views of Cuba's leaders. In the words of the editors of *Monthly Review*²

"Régis Debray though writing only in his capacity as a private student of revolutionary theory and practice, has succeeded in presenting to the world an accurate and profound account of the thinking of the leaders of the Cuban Revolution on these subjects.... We have here for the first time a comprehensive and authoritative presentation of the revolutionary thought of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara."

One could argue that this claim is exaggerated. For example, on the most important question of the role of the political vanguard (to which I shall

¹"Problems of Revolutionary Strategy in Latin America"—*New Left Review*, No. 45, p. 23.

²*Monthly Review*, July-August 1967. [Foreword by Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy to *Revolution in the Revolution*.

¹Quoted in *Granma* January 28, 1968.

return), there seems on the face of it a divergence between the view of Debray and that contained in the report of the Cuban delegation to the August 1967 OLAS Conference and the remarks by Fidel Castro in his closing speech.

Nevertheless, a general belief that Debray's thinking is so closely associated with that of the Cuban Revolution, lends prestige to his propositions.

The editors of *New Left Review* in their introductory notes to Debray's article 'Problems of Revolutionary Strategy in Latin America' go further. They describe some of his fundamental propositions as 'authentically Leninist' and generally project his thinking as embodying the true essence of Bolshevik strategy and its renovation for Latin American conditions.

In the light of these claims, which have undoubtedly influenced the thinking of many militants both within and outside Latin America, it becomes even more necessary to subject his thesis to a searching examination.

Significance of Cuba

In doing this we must not overlook the fact that Debray was tackling a Continent in the context of an event which marks an absolute watershed in the history of revolutionary struggles in Latin America—the Cuban Revolution. This historic event did more than liberate the Cuban people from the Batista dictatorship and set Cuba along the path of socialist construction. In a sense, it was Latin America's 'October'. It became the contemporary symbol for all in Latin America of the successful revolutionary struggle, the catalyst of a thorough-going reappraisal of many of the fundamental problems of the Latin American revolution—a process which is as yet incomplete.

Old clichés and the dogmatic invocation of 'eternal rules of revolutionary struggle, stood in the way of the evolution of a strategy which accorded with the reality of Latin American conditions. Francisco Mieres, a leading Venezuelan communist, writing in *World Marxist Review*⁴ put it as follows:

"Unfortunately we received the legacy of October which became the basis of our revolutionary movement, rather tailored and distorted.... This was one of the reasons why our theoretical work was not distinguished for either richness or originality. It did not draw on the reality of our countries nor did it have the ability for genuine self-regeneration.

"The Cuban Revolution challenged everything, upset everything, stripped the sacred sham-truisms from the altar and subjected everything to criticism (not always correctly let it be said) and gave rise to doubts, confusion and over-simplification. But out of this chaos would come ultimately the Latin American theory of revolution."

Amongst the more significant discussions of revolutionary theory which the Cuban revolution helped to spark off, were the questions of the revolution-

nary potentialities of the national bourgeoisie, the much vexed question of alliances, fronts and so on, the role of the vanguard, as well as the question of the maturing of a revolutionary situation. More particularly it raised the problem of the extent to which the subjective factor can either utilise or create the revolutionary situation.

For example, Che Guevara in his book *Guerilla Warfare* wrote: 'The Cuban Revolution reveals that...one does not necessarily have to wait for a revolutionary situation to arise: it can be created'. This conclusion refutes 'those who feel the need to wait until, in some perfect way, all the required objective and subjective conditions are at hand, instead of hastening to bring these conditions about through their own efforts'.

An interesting commentary on this problem is contained in a paper by Dr Grigory Glezerman—'Correlation of the Objective Conditions and the Subjective Factor in the light of the experience of the October Revolution' in which one of his main conclusions is stated as follows:

'It is impossible to agree with the opinion of some authors that in present-day conditions the maturing of a revolutionary situation increasingly depends on the maturity of the political army of the revolution, on the strategy and tactics of the Party and other elements of the subjective factor Determined action of the revolutionary forces, supported by the masses, can be merely the impetus which speeds the maturing of the revolutionary situation, but only if sufficient combustible material has accumulated in a country, if there are objective conditions creating a revolutionary situation. The idea that the boldness and determination of the revolutionary vanguard are sufficient to rouse the masses to revolution, is a dangerous illusion.'⁵

Drawing on the Cuban experience, Debray generalises more or less as follows (and more or less for the whole of Latin America):

- (a) What he calls 'Fidelism' is, according to him, characterised in the first place by 'its refusal of the *coup d'état*'.⁶ He makes the point that whatever the forces that initially support it, a government brought to power by a putsch necessarily tends to the right. The fact that the army is, to a greater extent than previously, recruited from sections of the lower middle class, has led to the theory that the army becomes a 'social microcosm which reflects the contradictions of the national macrocosm'. But, 'it is an absolute rule that one cannot base a strategy or even a tactical episode of the struggle upon the decision of a regiment or a garrison'.⁸

⁴*Voprosi Filosofii*, No. 11, 1967.

⁵One might add that this has always been the traditional approach of Leninism.

⁷It is not altogether clear to which groups Debray alludes as endorsing this theory. To my knowledge not a single contemporary communist party in Latin America regards the *coup d'état* as a substitute for revolutionary struggle.

⁸'Latin America: The Long March' (*New Left Review*, September-October 1965, p. 20).

⁴*World Marxist Review*, No. 11, 1967.

(b) At the opposite end to those who advocate 'revolutionary putschism' (Blanquism as applied to the actions of a military rather than a civilian minority), are the advocates of 'pure mass action'. The 'cautious truism' that revolution requires the conscious entry of the masses into the struggle is, Debray claims, proffered by many communist leaderships without an indication from them of *how* to awaken the masses in regions whose repressive instruments make political activity virtually impossible except amongst 'the narrow stratum of urban intelligentsia'.⁹

(c) What then is to be done? Debray answers: 'Fidelism replies in terms which are similar to those of Lenin in 1902....In Fidelist terms, this is the theory of the Foco',¹⁰ of 'the insurrectionary centre.' In short the answer lies in the creation of insurrectionary centres and not waiting for all the conditions for revolution to be fulfilled. In Latin America the creation of an insurrectionary centre can create conditions for revolution. Also in Latin American conditions, urban insurrections can be crushed too easily, hence the terrain of armed struggle must basically be in the countryside.

These formulations contain a mixture of truths, half-truths and impermissible generalisations.

In so far as they are based on the assumption that the strategic road in Latin America lies in the direction of armed struggle, they say little that is new.¹¹

Presumptuous Attitude

In contrast to Debray's more engaging qualities, one is unpleasantly affected by his arrogant attitude to most Latin American Communists, who have behind them a lifetime of struggle and sacrifice, an experience and knowledge of their countries which no outsider could hope to rival. He depicts the bulk of the Communist Party leaderships in the area as sitting back and waiting for the evolution of a revolutionary situation without any realist plan of how to awaken the masses. The broad sweep of his advice to revolutionaries in every part of his huge and varied Continent¹² is quite overpowering in its presumptuousness.

He dismisses with sarcastic contempt the slogan

⁹Ibid., p. 22.

¹⁰An armed minority which 'establishes itself at the most vulnerable zone of the national territory, and then slowly spreads like an oil patch, propagating itself in concentric ripples through the peasant masses to the smaller towns, and finally to the capital'. (Ibid., p. 27).

¹¹Francisco Mieres (*W. M. R.* November 1967): 'As regards the general strategic road in Latin America, there exists practically complete unanimity. Armed struggle here is the rule and the peaceful way the exception'.

¹²Most of South America is predominantly rural, but the rate of urbanisation is growing and in many countries is already significantly high. By 1960 Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Cuba and Venezuela had urban majorities, and by 1970 it is anticipated that Colombia, Peru and even Brazil will be added to this list. See article 'Peasants and Rural Migrants' by E. J. Hobsbawm in *The Politics of Conformity*.

adopted by the Argentinian Communist Party at its Twelfth Congress—'Towards the Conquest of Power through the Action of the Masses!'¹³ but has no positive alternative of his own. His general formula has no validity here, for Debray himself concedes that in Argentina, with its urban concentration of 75 per cent of the population, a rural insurrectionary centre 'can only have a subordinate role', that nothing can be achieved without the active participation of the urban workers, that a general strike short of insurrection 'tends to be broken by violence'.¹⁴ There are generalised clichés about armed struggle and preparation for such struggle. But if, as he emphasises repeatedly, urban insurrections have become a virtual impossibility; if 'pure mass action' is spurned, what future is there for the Argentinian masses? What is the answer to the crucial question of the strategy for the transfer of power in Argentina? Debray sheds little light on this. It would be surprising, if in fact, as a stranger to the situation, he was qualified or able to provide effective guidance on these questions.

Nor is this the only case where his sweeping generalisations, by his own admission, fail to meet the test of application to specific countries.

In Uruguay, Debray says, there are no conditions for armed struggle.

One does not know whether he agrees with the formulation of the Cuban delegation at the August 1967 OLAS Conference, when it stated that in the case of Chile it would be 'foolish and absurd' to speak of guerilla warfare.

He dismisses as 'irrational optimism' the thesis contained in the Chilean Communist Party programme approved at its twelfth Congress in March 1962, that 'the present correlation of national and international forces has increased the possibility of achieving revolution without armed struggle'. If it is 'foolish and absurd' to talk of armed struggle in Chile and it is 'irrational optimism' to envisage the possibility of achieving revolution without armed struggle, what is the answer? Again, as in the case of Argentina, flamboyant talk about reformism, opportunism and bourgeois election tactics is combined with an absence of guidance for those who actually have to do the struggling in Chile.

Writing in 1965,¹⁵ he says of Bolivia, that it is the only country where the subjective and objective conditions are best combined. It is 'the only country in South America where a socialist revolution is on the agenda' and it is also 'the *only* country where the revolution might take the classical Bolshevik form' [my emphasis]. He therefore draws the conclusion that the theory of the 'Foco' is, for Bolivia, 'if not inadequate, at any rate secondary'. Yet it could not have been so long after this statement that Bolivia was chosen as the region where

¹³*New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 22.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵'Latin America: The Long March'. *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 26.

Che Guevara was to devote his considerable talent to the precise purpose of creating guerilla Foci.

In the face of his sweeping prescriptions for most of the regions of this vast continent, it is rather baffling to read the following written by him in 1965:¹⁶

"Armed struggle absolutely cannot be brandished in Latin America as a categorical imperative or a remedy in itself: armed struggle conducted by whom one may ask, when, where, with what programme, what alliances? These are concrete problems which no one in the world can resolve abstractly—only the national vanguard which alone carry the weight of the political responsibilities. In other words, the Foco cannot constitute a strategy in itself without condemning itself to failure. It is a moment of struggle whose place can only be defined within an overall integrating strategy."

This is not the only place in the works of Debray where a general proposition is proffered which, either in the very same article or in a subsequent article, is contradicted without any explanation.

For a vanguard to be able to carry out its political responsibilities more is needed than generalised theoretical structures, formal statistical and analytical equipment. It requires assessments by indigenous political activists who know and understand not only the demonstrable facts but who, in addition, have a 'feel' for their people, a sensitivity to their mood and the sort of revolutionary instinct which enables them at every given stage to differentiate between the possible and the fanciful. Surely no outsider can hope to legislate with such aplomb for the different countries, otherwise we will not avoid the same sort of vulgarisation with the so-called 'Cuban model' as occurred with the 'October model'.

Conditions for Revolution

In a famous formula (in *'Left-Wing' Communism—an Infantile Disorder*) Lenin stated a 'fundamental law' of revolution as follows:

"It is not enough for revolution that the exploited and the oppressed masses should understand the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes, it is essential for revolution that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way...revolution is impossible without a nationwide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters)."

There may well be substance in Debray's claim that inappropriate and mechanical adherence to this formulation, regardless of changing and different conditions, may have acted as an obstacle to revolutionary initiatives by some vanguard parties. Lenin was here discussing the problems of a general insurrection, and not the way in which a revolutionary organisation can by its political and organisational work, help create favourable objective conditions for the conquest of power. But this has not always been appreciated.

In some countries (including Cuba) the commencement of armed struggle which led to eventual victory was undertaken by groups outside the Com-

munist ranks and in some cases with initial opposition from Communist Parties. There is no doubt (and again, Cuba is proof of this) that given certain minimum pre-conditions, the actual commencement and sustaining of guerilla activities operates as an extremely important factor in hastening the evolution of insurrectionary conditions. In this sense to sit back and wait for the evolution of the classical objective conditions which constitute a 'revolutionary situation', amounts, in some cases, to a dereliction of leadership duties.

At the same time it is a dangerous illusion, fostered by so many of Debray's expansive and over-generalised formulations, that the injection of armed groups into a country in which there is severe repression will of itself (and subject only to the professional skill of the armed groups) 'slowly spread like an oil patch'.

This neo-Blanquist¹⁷ approach is given emphasis by Debray's astounding proposition that the guerilla band must initially shun the civilian peasant population and aim at knocking out the troops of the enemy. He gives as one of his reasons the cultural disparity between the guerillas (mainly students and intellectual and the peasants. Can anything be more indicative of the false thesis that the heroic deeds of the revolutionary elite of students and intellectuals will of itself win over the masses and create the objective conditions for the successful transfer of power?

Debray says that the most serious mistake would be to see in the Foco a revival of Blanquism. 'It is a minority certainly, but one which unlike a Blanquist minority of activists, aims to win over the masses before and not after the seizure of power and which makes this the essential condition of the final conquest of power.' Also it is distinguished from Blanquism, because 'it does not in any way aim at a lightning victory or even for a rapid outcome of the revolutionary war.'¹⁸ Is there any reason in principle why we should not aim for a rapid outcome of the revolutionary war?

For all his protestations that his theory of the 'Foco' differs fundamentally from Blanquism, there is an extremely important area in which both approaches have a common root—the belief that the actions of the small heroic and dedicated group will on its own stimulate mass support.

This is not a chance departure from Marxist-Leninist concepts relating to the strategy and tactics of revolutionary struggles. It forms part of a consistent pattern arising from Debray's approach to the place of revolutionary theory in the revolutionary struggle, the character of the political vanguard and its relationship to armed struggle.

¹⁷Blanquism—a trend in the French socialist movement headed by Louis August Blanqui (1805-1881). The classics of Marxism-Leninism, while regarding Blanqui as an outstanding revolutionary and adherent of socialism, criticised him for his sectarianism and conspiratorial methods. The Blanquists repudiated the class struggle, expecting the 'emancipation of mankind from wage slavery to be brought about not by means of the class struggle of the proletariat, but through a conspiracy of a small minority of intellectuals' (Lenin).

¹⁸'Latin America: The Long March'. *New Left Review*, No. 33, pp. 27-8.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 35.

Army and Party

Debray's fundamental thesis—the crux of his analysis—is on the relationship between the 'Foco' and the political vanguard:

"No part of the guerilla movement has attempted to organise a new party; it seeks rather to wipe out doctrinal or party divisions amongst its own combatants..... The most decisive political choice is membership in the guerilla forces, in the Armed Forces of Liberation."¹⁹

When he talks of the 'Foco' having the right to constitute itself as the vanguard independently of the Marxist-Leninist Parties, he has in mind this sort of broad grouping which differs basically from the vanguard concept in Leninism.

Thus to the question, Can the Party under existing Latin American conditions create the Popular Army or is it up to the Popular Army to create the Vanguard? he answers unequivocally 'Eventually the future people's army will beget the party of which it is to be, theoretically the instrument: essentially the party is the army'.²⁰

He makes it absolutely clear that his conclusion is not primarily based on a passing state of affairs in which existing vanguards have, as he claims, been ineffective in creating the popular army, but in the phase preceding the seizure of power, the predominance of the political vanguard, the party, over the military, is not valid for Latin America.²¹ 'The people's army will be the nucleus of the party, not vice versa.'²²

He partly attempts to support this proposition by referring in some detail to what he considers to be the harmful effects on the practical conduct of the military struggle, of the existence of two leadership groups—the military and the political. He wrongly suggests that these harmful effects are completely unavoidable when the political vanguard has overall direction of the armed struggle.

But in the main, his conclusions flow logically from what he has said previously on a number of fundamental questions in the course of which it becomes clear that his approach stands in direct conflict with basic and fundamental (not just tactical) principles of Marxism and Leninism. There are of course no 'sacred cows'. That it conflicts with a tenet of Leninism does not automatically condemn a proposition. But when Debray himself and his protagonists claim authority from Lenin in support of his thesis, we are entitled to question this. If it stands in conflict with Leninism we are further entitled to ask whether he has advanced sufficient analysis and argument to make us doubt the historically tested, impressive and profound doctrines of Leninism.

Anti-Leninist Approach

What has led Debray to the repudiation of the Leninist political vanguard in this stage prior to the seizure of power? It is in the first place his anti-Leninist approach to the whole question of ideology

and the role of theory in revolutionary struggle. Witness for example the following references from *Revolution in the Revolution*:

"One may well consider it a stroke of good luck that Fidel had not read the military writings of Mao Tse-tung before disembarking on the coast of Oriente. (p. 20)"

"In that sense (that the Latin American revolutionary war possesses highly special and profoundly distinct conditions of development) all the theoretical works on peoples' war does as much harm as good. (p. 21).

"The sending of cadres to schools for political studies and the flanking of the military cadres with 'political commissars' is bound to hamper the natural emergence of popular leaders, of well-rounded military-political leaders. (p. 90)

"The best teacher of Marxism-Leninism is the enemy, in face to face confrontation during the peoples' war. Study and apprenticeship are necessary, but not decisive. There are no academy-trained cadres, (p. 111)"

This is quite clearly not just an appeal for a combination of practice with theory, but a denigration of the correct Leninist principle that (historical accidents apart), the leadership of a political struggle (and a peoples' armed struggle is a political struggle by techniques which include organised violence) requires a thorough grasp and understanding of scientific theory. To say that 'the best teacher of Marxism-Leninism is the enemy in face to face confrontation' is a piece of rhetorical nonsense.

This competitive contrast between revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice; this rejection of the true role of theory and its place in a revolutionary struggle, stems from the quite incorrect assumption that the scientific principles of Marxism-Leninism grow naturally and almost spontaneously out of struggle. A clue that this is what Debray believes is contained in the following statement:

"There is a further reason why Fidelism lays a greater stress on revolutionary practice, when it is honest and sincere, than on ideological labels: this is the special conditions of South America the dynamism of nationalist struggles brings them to a conscious adoption of Marxism."²³

I emphasise this because if Debray is correct in his contention that the acceptance of correct ideology and scientific socialism will arise, in the special conditions of Latin America²⁴ from the very process of struggle, then indeed, it is not vital to start off with a theoretical grasp of scientific principles nor a vanguard party to propagate them. The struggle will create all this.

But this belief that a people or a class which is engaged 'in honest and sincere revolutionary practice' will of necessity arrive at the correct ideological termini, is an old illusion advanced in the revolutionary movement not for the first time. It

²³. 'Latin America: The Long March'. *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 54.

²⁴. The special conditions referred to are that 'The struggle against imperialism does not take the form of a front against foreign forces of occupation, but proceeds by means of revolutionary civil war'.

¹⁹. *Revolution in the Revolution*, pp. 104-5.

²⁰. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

²¹. *Ibid.*, p. 91 and following.

²². *Ibid.*, p. 116.

was at the nub of the thesis of the Russian 'Economists' and their German Revisionist counterparts.

'Many of our Revisionist critics believe that economic development and the class struggle create not only the conditions for socialist production, but also, and directly, the consciousness of its necessity.....The proletariat becomes conscious of the possibility and of the necessity for socialism. In this connection socialist consciousness appears to be a necessary and direct result of the proletarian class struggle. But this is absolutely untrue.' Of course, socialism as a doctrine has its roots in modern economic relationships just as the class struggle of the proletariat has.....But socialism and the class struggle arise side by side and not out of the other; each arises under different conditions. Modern socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound scientific knowledge...There can be no talk of an independent ideology being developed by the masses of the workers themselves in the process of the movement.....There is a lot of talk about spontaneity but the spontaneous development of the working-class movement leads to its becoming subordinated to the bourgeois ideology.'²⁵

And if it is true of workers in direct conflict with their class enemy that, left to themselves, they tend towards bourgeois-rather than proletarian ideology, how much more true is this of a struggle whose main content is national in character. What is there special about Latin America that Debray can claim that there as a general rule, the Party.....will be formed and its cadres will be selected through the natural processes of the liberation struggle as happened in Cuba.²⁶

We may note that even in Cuba the Communist Party was not a pure product of the natural processes of the struggle initiated by the July 26th Movement, but came into existence as a result of an amalgamation of the July 26th Movement and the People's Socialist Party (old Communist Party) which in all the works of Debray is mentioned only once, and that in a footnote.

He describes the coming into being of the Cuban Communist Party as follows: 'The Party is the same age as the Revolution, it will be fourteen on July 26th, 1967. Moncada was the nucleus of the rebel army which was in turn the nucleus of the Party. Around this nucleus and only because it already had its own political-military leadership, other political forces have been able to assemble and unite forming what is today the Communist Party of Cuba.'²⁷ Ignored completely is the fact that the PSP over a period of many years had done a great deal to prepare the ground for the socialist revolution.

Debray does say that his theory applies only to the preparatory stage of the seizure of power and that a communist party becomes indispensable only after victory for the construction of socialism. He argues that an anti-imperialist national liberation

struggle in a colonial or semi-colonial territory cannot be conducted under the banner of Marxism-Leninism or the leadership of the working class 'for obvious reasons'.²⁸

As a general proposition this is neither obvious nor correct. The banner of Marxism-Leninism in the type of territory referred to is precisely anti-imperialism and national liberation. And where there is a sufficiently developed working class, there is every reason why it should either on its own or in alliance (as in Vietnam) lead the national liberation struggle.

Lenin says of armed struggle that it 'must be ennobled by the enlightened and organising influence of socialism. And without this latter condition every (Lenin's emphasis), positively every, method of struggle in bourgeois society approximates the proletariat to the position of the various non-proletarian strata above and below it, and if left to the spontaneous course of events, becomes frayed, corrupted and prostituted'.²⁹

Debray draws attention to what he describes as a significant detail: 'During the two years of warfare, Fidel did not hold a single political rally in his zone of operations'.³⁰ We cannot presume to question the wisdom of this approach by Castro in the specific circumstances which faced him. The example is, however, invoked to counterpose the superiority of revolutionary practice over revolutionary theory, action against propaganda—as if these were exclusive concepts instead of being interwoven and complementary.

There is, in any case, evidence that the Cuban leaders do not altogether go along with Debray's rejection of the vanguard, his militaristic approach to political struggle in Latin America and his dismissal of almost every form of struggle short of violence (or preparation for it) as non-revolutionary. In his closing address to the August 1967 OLAS Conference, Castro insisted that 'the guerilla war must be organised by a political movement, by a political organisation' and the report of the Cuban delegation contained the following: 'The fact that the people's army is organised in the country and that the development of a mass peasant movement is of fundamental importance, does not mean that the leadership of the struggle must not be guided by a proletarian ideology. On the contrary, the ideas of the proletariat (and its best cadres) must be at the head of this struggle. *We are dealing with a war waged in the country, but not with a peasant war*' (emphasis in text).

The Vanguard Classes

Having 'renovated' Bolshevik strategy to the point at which one of its most fundamental tenets—the role of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard armed with scientific theory—is, in effect, completely denied prior to the conquest of power, the next step is a rejection of the traditional Marxist-Leninist concept of the working class as a vanguard class in the revo-

²⁵. Lenin: *What is to be Done?* (approvingly quoting Karl Kautsky).

²⁶. 'Latin America: The Long March'. *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 38.

²⁷. *Revolution in the Revolution*, p. 106.

²⁸. 'Latin America: The Long March.' *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 38.

²⁹. Lenin: *Partisan Warfare*.

³⁰. *Revolution in the Revolution*, p. 54.

lutionary struggle (which Lenin described as 'the main thing in the doctrine of Marx').³¹ His claim that 'the Cuban Revolution has established that in the insurrectionary phase of the revolution, while it is indispensable to have some sort of organisation and a firm political leadership (July 26th Movement), it is possible to do without a vanguard. Marxist-Leninist Party of the working class' is in harmony with his generalised contention that in Latin American conditions the revolutionary struggle cannot be led by the working class.

This contention has its roots not only in the incorrect claim that a working class cannot lead an anti-imperialist national liberation struggle in a colonial or semi-colonial country, but, it appears, that it is the very character of the urban proletariat which makes it generally unfit to lead a revolutionary armed struggle. The city, says Debray, can 'bourgeoisify' the proletarians while the mountain 'as we know' 'proletarianises' the bourgeoisie and the peasants. The tactical conflicts in a movement conceal a class conflict in which the interests of the proletariat are not 'paradoxically' enough on the side which one would expect'.³² He quotes Che Guevara as saying that the rebel army is already ideologically proletarian and thinks like a dispossessed class whilst the city remains petty bourgeois, contains future traitors amongst its leaders and is very influenced by the milieu in which it develops.

Debray in his denigration of the role of the proletariat may well have been influenced by the theoretical writing of Frantz Fanon.³³ But unlike Fanon, he does not proceed to the conclusion that the peasantry is the vanguard class since, the "illiterate peasants...suffocated by centuries of 'social peace' under a feudal regime...cannot be awakened or acquire political consciousness by a process of thought, reflection and reading...They will be followers of 'propaganda by facts'".³⁴

Since the national bourgeoisie has been excluded from playing any significant role, to which class falls the role of vanguard in the revolutionary struggle? It appears that in Latin America the 'irony of history willed...the assignment of...this vanguard role to students and revolutionary intellectuals who have to unleash or rather initiate the highest form of class struggle'³⁵ and 'The students are in the vanguard of the revolution in Latin America'. This latter fact makes it possible, according to Debray, to set up secondary centres of armed struggle in the towns not, *mark you*, amongst the working class, but in the universities.³⁶

On this question of the role of the proletariat as well as on the questions already considered of ideology and the vanguard party, Debray betrays a

sort of static empiricism which denudes much of what he says of its value.

Although he correctly expresses a distaste for the setting up of 'revolutionary models' whether it be Russian, Chinese or Cuban (he even expresses the hope that the word 'Fidelism' will disappear)³⁷ the overall impact of his thesis is precisely to set up the Cuban experience as a model for all in Latin America. Such an approach may well continue to encourage many militants to embark on the type of action which, he concedes, has already led to the destruction of half a hundred revolutionary organisations.

The Cuban revolution and its leadership has made an incalculable contribution to the storehouse of revolutionary theory and practice. But in assessing the Cuban experience two errors must be avoided. The one is the rejection of some of its vital lessons on the parrot-cry, 'but Cuba was different'. The other is an inability to determine what in the Cuban revolution has universal, and what has purely local, application.

Both in regard to the Cuban Revolution and other major revolutionary experiences of the twentieth century, Debray tends to confuse the general with the particular. Thus, having correctly spoken about the harm which the unthinking application of the 'October' model did, he proceeds to discuss modern revolutionary processes as if the whole of Lenin's theoretical contribution on this vital question is an anachronism for most of Latin America. In the sameway having correctly differentiated the conditions of the struggle in China and Vietnam from those applying in Latin America, he shows an inability to extract from these revolutions the valid theoretical lessons which have universal application.

Surely one of the most fundamental lessons of all these enriching experiences is the *absolute* necessity of revolutionary political leadership guided by a grasp of scientific revolutionary theory. Of course, just as history continues to move even if man is ignorant of its laws, so revolutions and armed struggle have occurred, and will continue to occur, in given objective conditions even in the absence of a vanguard party or a single person who understands scientific theory. But if Leninism has taught us anything it is surely this: the existence of such a vanguard group equipped with knowledge and an understanding of the science of struggle not only speeds up the process but makes more certain that the fruits of victory are not snatched away. How many 'people's' armed struggles have we seen in recent decades in which most of the participants were 'honest and sincere' and ready to die and yet the 'natural' process of the struggle generated either a militarist dictatorship or gave birth to right-wing regimes.

With Rousseau-like romanticism Debray insists that 'by a collective working of the soil' and so on the guerillas are forced to 'proletarianise' themselves morally and ideologically. 'It is almost impossible' says Debray 'that a Foco, the embryo of a popular army, should develop militarist tendencies.' This is

³¹ Lenin: *Marx-Engels Marxism*.

³² Debray: *Revolution in the Revolution*, pp. 76-7.

³³ Frantz Fanon: *Wretched of the Earth*.

³⁴ 'Latin America: The Long March.' *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 41.

³⁵ *Revolution in the Revolution*, p. 21.

³⁶ 'Latin America: The Long March'. *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 31.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 58.

not analysis but rhetoric. It is a rare and almost accidental phenomenon that revolutionary struggles, whether armed or not, lead to the sort of victory all of us desire without the guidance of a political revolutionary vanguard of the Leninist type.

That is why we must reject the new dogma which Debray advances that in most of Latin America 'at the present juncture, [the principal stress must be laid on the development of guerilla warfare and not on the strengthening of existing parties or the creation of new parties'.³⁸ The absence of a vanguard or its weakness is undoubtedly one of the prime factors in determining whether subjective conditions for the effective development of guerilla warfare exist. In any case why must we regard the two tasks as being so mutually contradictory? Only on Debray's false thesis that a 'real party' can only arise from a guerilla force which 'is the political vanguard *in nuce*'.³⁹

A Vanguard is Essential

It is, of course, true that the fact that the word 'Communist' is part of an organisation's name does not automatically transform it into a vanguard, nor can it claim exclusive ownership of the revolution, except by the calibre of its leadership and actions. The failures and mistakes of some parties in no way detracts from the fact that a political vanguard is indispensable. It is neither Debray nor any other stranger to a situation who has the capacity to carry the burden of deciding the question of the commencement of any specific form of action and to guide its development. Debray's passionate appeal for action everywhere—which really amounts to an exhortation for every man to become his own Castro—falls into the category of a cure which is more pernicious than the disease.

The fact that individual revolutionary geniuses arise who are capable, almost instinctively, of applying correct principles to a given situation even without knowledge of them (as Debray claims of Castro and his group) in no way invalidates the Leninist thesis of the vanguard. The invocation of the Cuban example in support of the generalised contention that in Latin America the Popular Army gives birth to the vanguard and not vice versa, is a fallacy. The precise way in which the two streams of the leadership of the Cuban Revolution—the PSP and the July 26th Movement—eventually merged to form the present Communist Party of Cuba, requires detailed historical description which is not evident in Debray's work. But to deal with the Cuban situation as if the history of the struggle for workers' power began in 1957, is to do violence to truth.

Revolution is a complex and challenging art. Its tactical and strategic tasks do not remain static but depend on the never-ceasing interplay and positioning of class forces both inter-nationally and nationally, the interaction of objective and subjective factors and so on. *To put it at its lowest we must doubt the adequacy of the 'Foco' isolated from the masses both in town and countryside*

³⁸. Ibid., p. 116.

³⁹. Ibid., p. 116.

and unified only by war and its immediate political objectives, to give overall political guidance.

The impressive points made by Debray on the disadvantages of attempting to conduct the tactical aspects of the guerilla struggle from the cities or on the need for the political leadership or sections of it, to join the armed groups, do not form a legitimate basis for the liquidation or the disregard of national vanguards. It in no way follows, as Debray believes, that the man wielding the gun is the most suited to determine overall revolutionary strategy.

Who gives guidance to the peasantry? Who mobilises the urban workers in support of the armed struggle? Who decides, in relation to the total situation, the course of the armed struggle including the need that may arise to intensify it—or even temporarily, to call it off? The 'Foco', almost by definition is on its own incapable of this because of lack of contact with the total situation, and because, certainly in the initial stages, it has no cohesive ideological basis.

A contrary view can only be sustained by a false belief that only *he* is 'making' the revolution who physically confronts the enemy with a gun in hand. Not only does this approach distort the place of armed struggle in integrated overall revolutionary strategy, but it is based on the mystical belief that the 'people' will inevitably and without ideological and organisational preparation, follow the example of the 'heroic group'. In addition it incorporates the fallacy that this heroic group will, through the baptism of fire, evolve towards Marxism and stand ready to be the Marxist-Leninist vanguard when the construction of socialism is on the agenda.

This sort of military economism has nothing in common with Leninism—a name under which it parades. It is presumptuous because it seeks to give a flood of over-generalised advice to almost a whole continent. It is harmful because it gives birth to, and nurtures the subjective illusion that revolutions can be 'made' rather than led. Above all, in its emphasis on the primacy of revolutionary practice over revolutionary theory it is anti-scientific because it destroys the harmony which should be aimed for between the two and replaces it with a crude sort of determinism which has very little in common with Leninism.

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The Bureaucrat's Priorities

IT is seldom realised how unbelievably powerful the Finance Ministry has become, the empire of Morarji Desai. Practically every Ministry has to kowtow to it if it has to get on with its work.

But it is not only on big issues that the Finance Ministry throws its weight about; it seems to find almost a sadistic pleasure in exercising its veto on petty matters as well.

I have before me a very revealing case which shows up the doings of the Finance Ministry. An International Geological Congress has been currently taking place in Prague—from August 19 to 29. The Secretary-General of this Congress invited a distinguished Indian scientist to preside over the Sections on Endogenic ore-deposits and Genesis of ore-deposits. Professor S. Deb, Head of the Department of the Geological Sciences at Jadavpur University was chosen for this signal honour.

Dr. Deb who is a Fellow of the National Institute of Sciences, presided over the same Sections at the previous session of this international Congress which was held in India some years back. He also presided

over the Section on Geology and Geography at the Indian Science Congress in 1964. He is also the Asian Regional Counsellor of the International Association of Genesis of ore-deposits.

The University Grants Commission, recognising the importance of this invitation, offered to share the passage expenses along with the Government of West Bengal. Taking it for granted that there would be no hitch about his attending the Congress, Dr Deb conveyed to the organisers his acceptance of their invitation, and accordingly his name was officially printed in the programme of the session as being due to preside over two Sections.

At this stage, the Finance Ministry stepped in. Because, under the present dispensation, the power to let or not let anybody go out of the country rests ultimately with the Finance Ministry—not with the Home or the External Affairs Ministries. Dr Deb had asked for foreign exchange for a very paltry sum and that too not in dollars, but rupee payment equivalent to about sixty dollars; in other words,

foreign Czech currency worth about Rs 450.

But the Burra Sahibs in the Finance Ministry would not budge. According to them, a delegation sponsored by the Ministry of Mines and Metals was going; and so, obviously, by their logic there was no need for any University man to go to the Congress, even if he is billed to preside over some of its sections.

The Education Minister himself moved in the matter; but how can Dr Triguna Sen's word count against Morarji's super-inflated officials in the Finance Ministry? They stuck to their 'no' to the grant of Rs 450 as foreign exchange. They are not bothered if it is going to be badly thought of at Prague.

If it was Kantibhai going to South Korea or Sri Birla's third-man-in-waiting going to Bonne to hold his brief case, the conditional reflex of these Finance Ministry bosses will not be difficult to anticipate. But a University Professor presiding over Scientists' deliberations at an international meet is a very low-priority personality in their set of values.

—Scribbler

MUSINGS ON CZECHOSLOVAKIA—II

(Continued from Page 11)

themselves brought about a revolution. The trumpeter has never been mistaken for the soldier, however astrident his trumpeting may be.

The parliamentary form itself has its serious drawbacks as could be seen in our country, while a free press, that is, under private

ownership, can hardly be the true reflection of the life and aspirations of the toiling millions; no elaboration is needed on this score for any Indian democrat today. Lenin himself explained this in 1919: "Democracy assumed different forms and was applied in different degrees in the ancient

republics of Greece, the medieval cities and the advanced capitalist countries. It would be sheer nonsense to think that the most profound revolution in human history, the first case in the world of power being transferred from the exploiting minority to the exploited majority, could take

place within the time-worn framework of the old, bourgeois, parliamentary democracy, without drastic changes, without the creation of new forms of democracy, new institutions that embody the new conditions for applying democracy, etc.’’

Moreover, the Czechoslovak happenings cannot by themselves be a prototype for other countries. There is an element of unreality about it. A country whose main burden of defence is shared by other countries, particularly by a powerful and friendly neighbour which by its own might was instrumental in bringing about its liberation from the thralldom of capital—that country by itself cannot adequately furnish convincing evidence of a democratic experiment for others to emulate. It is only when a socialist country having its normal quota of burdens to bear—including the maintenance of its own security—can also demonstrate the practicability of an internal system with controls relaxed and individual freedoms enshrined, then only that experiment is invested with historic significance. The Action Programme of the Czechoslovak Communist Party guarantees many things under the sun but it does not ensure that together with all the internal liberties it can undertake the full burden of responsibility for guarding socialism without the least dependence on the rest of the socialist world. In this respect, social transformation towards more freedom for individuals when it will come in China will have relevance for the rest of the world, and more significant will be the ushering in of such an era in the Soviet Union.

In this connection, one has to bear in mind the inter-relation between democracy under socialism and the security of the socialist system as a whole vis-à-vis the hostile world of capitalism. It need not be forgotten that if the Dullesian dream of “liberating” Eastern Europe from the “clutches of Communism” has not materialised, it is not because of any change of heart among his successors in the State Department or the

Pentagon but a change of assessment about the power and the strength of the Socialist world. And this strength, incidentally, has not only fortified the frontiers of socialism from Shanghai to Sudetenland but has helped the newly-independent countries of Asia and Africa to march along the road to freedom. Moscow’s warning at the time of the Suez crisis finally brought about the downfall of Anthony Eden, and if the Chinese leaders today could afford the luxury of the Red Guard pandemonium, it is mainly because of the awareness of the U.S. with her Seventh Fleet, that the Soviet ICBM are not being produced merely for ceremonial parades in the Red Square. One has to realise that if the windows of freedom are being opened one by one in the world of socialism, it is accompanied in the same ratio by the strengthening of the defences of this new world, for which the contribution of the Soviet man has no precedent in history. The new epoch in world history in which the socialist system is claimed to have become the decisive force, is also the epoch which has seen that the military strength of the Soviet Union cannot be overpowered by any combination of imperialist States, unless some component of the socialist world itself collapses or betrays.

In the case of Czechoslovakia, one has to note its strategic location. Here is a country which can be regarded as the gateway to the very heart of socialist Europe. It was not for nothing that Hitler marched in to Prague as a halfway house to his plan to capture Ukraine, the granary of the Soviet Union. And today entry into Czechoslovakia is like grabbing the strategic crossroads of socialism. The stormy intellectual debates in Prague about the desirability of the Warsaw Pact could not be looked upon as academic exercises in the seclusion of a South Pole but in the very centre of socialism. And General Prechlik’s public pronouncement about the Warsaw Pact arrangements—not raised, be it noted, in the confidential confabulations of the

Pact countries—could not but evoke consternation.

It is true that Czechoslovakia 1968 is not Hungary 1956, but it is equally true that the vultures too have changed their style. Their methods have become subtler and instead of the Voice of America directing the operations as in 1956, they may be playing upon the genuine exuberance of an intellectual elite. The comparative strength of the bourgeois-democratic system in Czechoslovakia in the past also implies greater longevity of the bourgeois liberal influence in the post-revolutionary Czechoslovakia than in the post-revolutionary Russia, just as the persistence of the feudal ideology in post-revolutionary China is more than in the post-revolutionary Bulgaria.

A historical perspective of these problems of the post-revolutionary era shows that through methods of trial and error, the new world of socialism will have to learn to let freedom grow from more to more. Bratislava Declaration is important for it has sought to emphasise the need for a judicious balance between the urge for democratic freedom and the compulsions of security for the socialist world as a whole. This is the criterion by which the democratic masses all over the world will judge every twist and turn in the Czechoslovak happenings.

*

Musing over Czechoslovakia today one is reminded of her martyred son, Julius Fucik, who sang of the joys of freedom as he waited for the gallows, mandating “never let grief be linked with our name”; and it was the same Fucik who had exhorted his countrymen against the imperialist enemies: “People, Be on your guard.”

The morrow of joy for the working masses can be ensured only by their being on their guard.

August 19

Journey from Freedom

Leaves From A Diary: by Rajendralal Handa: India Publishing House.
Bombay 22; 1968, Rs. 22.50.

THE mass migration of people away from their ancestral homes and the soil they loved dearly in search of a sense of security and a new life in strange surroundings is obviously human drama at its most poignant. To have lived through partition and moved about among uprooted millions, trying to understand their varied and often conflicting emotions and attitudes, is an experience given only to some in several generations. The importance and interest of Sri Handa's book lies chiefly in this fact, that among those who left this country against their will and inclination to settle in unknown Pakistan were many dear friends and he found many friends similarly among those who came away from the new neighbouring country in order to live in peace.

The book is charming because it is made up not of a lecture on the causes and effects of Partition but of intensely and intimately felt personal experiences. These experiences were by no means unique, but as Sri Diwan Chand Sharma says in his foreword to the volume under review, "What the author has seen must have been seen by thousands of other persons and what he has felt must have been the experience of so many others, but the sights he has seen and the spectacles he has witnessed have come to acquire a significance all their own at his hands; he has invested all these with a literary quality which is rewarding."

The volume starts with certain impressions of personalities recorded by the author in 1934, 1936 and 1955—the personalities involved being Raja Narendra Nath, Sir Chottu Ram and the famous journalist Kali Nath Ray. Here are three totally different types of persons, yet Sri Handa attempts to bring out the best qualities in each. At least in the case of the latter two it was not easy, for Kali Nath Ray was an unsparing critic of Sir Chottu Ram while he lived and paid him warm tribute only on his death.

Thereafter the writer takes us back to the early war period, dealing with the impact, or the absence of impact, among the people of Delhi. Thus air raid precautions were only so much fun and a diversion; the shelters were popular with the children, and when the rains filled them to overflowing the pools served to help the kids enjoy themselves with paper boats. Smoking became an adventure, for one had to seek a protected place to light and enjoy a cigarette; it couldn't be done in the open, as the "enemy" might be alerted. It was all quite unreal to the common people in fact.

Wheat had disappeared from the market, and like the rest of Delhi's citizens Sri Handa was in difficulties. Very magnanimously the author says that wheat was available indeed, but "its price had soared so abruptly that even the seller fought shy

of quoting it." So Sri Handa went out one morning after tea to Paharganj to get wheat for his house. The mission was unsuccessful; in shop after shop he was told that the commodity was not available. When, dreading the prospect of facing his wife with empty hands, he was on his way back home, he chanced upon, a friend who, hearing of his plight offered to help him. So back to Paharganj—in fact, to one of the very shops where Sri Handa had been firmly told there was no stock. Sri Handa waited in the tonga while the friend went in, and—lo and behold! within minutes a maund of wheat lay at his feet. He paid Rs 17. Then came the problem of coal, and the friend again came to the rescue. Price, the same. The dealer told him: "Buy wheat or buy charcoal, the price for a a maund is Rs 17. Wheat is delivered here, and charcoal at your door." Sure enough, "next morning when I got up I found a gunny bag full of charcoal placed just at the entrance gate of my house."

Then came August 1942, and events which upset the "conservatism and traditions of loyalty" of Delhi. The people of Delhi in the past had merely been passive spectators or helpless victims of invasions and other activities of outsiders. Many offices up in flames. The Government at first did not take the incidents seriously, but once it was realised that the people

were in revolt the machinery of repression went into action. People were shot at sight during curfew hours, and one of the victims was the author's dhobi. He called at the dhobi's place for his clothes but came away without raising the subject when he found the man's aged mother prostrate with grief. Alongside such experiences the author had also another kind of experience: an accidental encounter with an American which led to close friendship. His conversations with the American GI provide interesting reading. One result was that after the GI has left India "my children started wasting their pocket-money on chewing-gum."

Curfew in Delhi had its lighter side too. The author tells of a debate on curfew. It was at a school, in 1948, in independent India. A schoolboy extolled the virtues of curfew. It meant that classes would be broken up and all students ordered to go home and to decide for themselves whether they would turn up the next day or not. Nobody bothered about home work. "Everything was so pleasantly uncertain." And so on. What struck the author most was the extraordinary understanding the boys showed of the implications of the nation having achieved independence.

The next few chapters deal with the merger of the princely states, in which the author obviously had deep interest. So much so that he prepared a plan for unification of the princely states of Rajputana and submitted it to Sardar Patel, who according to Sri Handa liked it very much. He seems to have a feeling that Jawaharlal Nehru was not so receptive to his ideas. The plan was published in the form of a book; he has provided some extracts from it relating to Kashmir ("from the chapter on Kashmir which was not commended and approved by Nehru"). The plan for 'the Kashmir Group' envisaged the formation of a loose unit with the Maharaja of Kashmir at its head and made up of "Kashmir Province," "the Jammu Unit" and "the Simla Hill States Unit." Many may be inclined to agree that Nehru is not to be blamed for not being

enthusiastic about it. Impressions of the progress of merger of the princely states culminating in the police action against the Nizam are given in one chapter.

The dawn of independence. The midnight transfer of power and the mighty emotions that moved men's hearts at that hour of joy, satisfaction and concern. The unspoken thought that could be read in every pair of eyes at the mention of Punjab, Sind and Bengal in the national anthem. The thrill of seeing the nation's beloved leaders installed in power. And finally the slogan: "Gayee Ghulami, Ayee Azadi."

But the people were not free to enjoy the experience of independence fully. The great migrations began following much bloodshed. The author's accounts of the conditions in the refugee camps, notably the Kurukshetra camp, are quite moving. With the same human warmth and sympathy he narrates the story of those Muslims who left India in long convoys much against their desire. An incident stands out: As the Home Minister was supervising arrangements for evacuation an old woman came up and said: "Saheb, all of you say you are friends of everybody. Only last month my nephew Shafi told me that in India there is no discrimination between the Muslim and the Hindu. Why then are we being driven out?..... We are attached to our land. We

do not want to leave Kalanaur..." The leader of the convoy got the old woman out of the way. This was only one of many instances. Then there was the problem of the Meos who had no love for Pakistan and who were no different from the Hindus in their ways. The Home Minister concluded that they were "a likeable people" but could not do much for them. Then the riots in Delhi and the Government's firm action to put them down. The evacuee camp at Purana Qila. The author discovered that a friend and his wife were there and with great difficulty met them. It was a sad experience. When the next week he went again with some condensed milk, etc. they had left for Pakistan. The author also paid a couple of visits to Pakistan to help refugees to come back. And there he met some old friends equally saddened by the separation from the land of their birth and from close friends.

Sri Handa has also given an idea of the courage and sturdy independence of many of the refugees from West Pakistan. They did not want charity; they wanted work and an opportunity to make good. No job was too small for them. No wonder then that the refugees are mostly well-to-do citizens of India today.

The book is readable, although the many grammatical and proof mistakes could have been easily avoided.

—V.A.A.

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35 P



"It was just a one-day token killing."



Holiday for Cradles

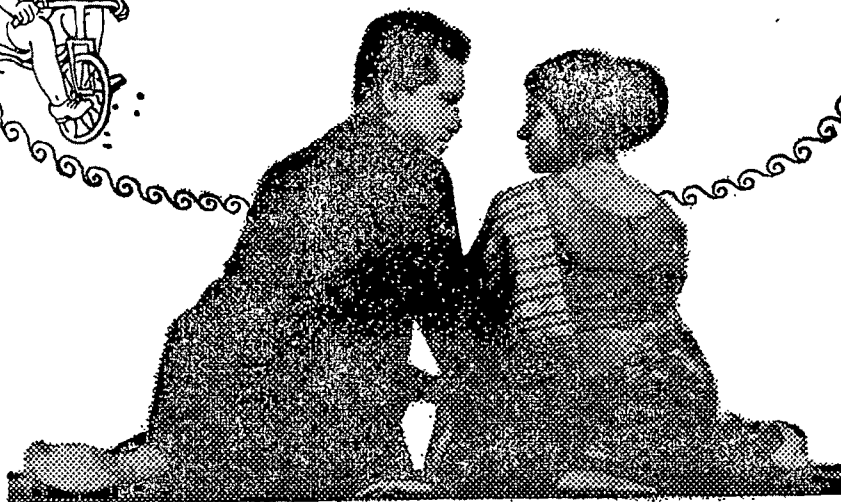
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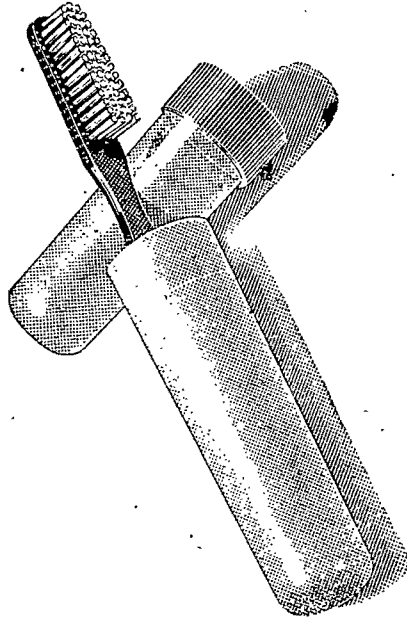
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GOVERNMENT IN THE DOCK

If proof were required that mindless weaklings wield power at the Centre in India, it is provided by the recent resort to strong-arm methods to deal with a symbolic one-day protest by Government employees. A Government which makes use of the police force to the maximum extent possible and seeks to give the colour of a law-and-order problem to a simple question of legitimate wage demands by its employees is surely neither strong nor competent. It is only men of straw whose power does not depend on the confidence and trust of the people who feel impelled to employ violence in the belief that the wheels of administration can be kept moving smoothly on that basis. By so doing they seek to convince themselves that they are indeed iron men who cannot be dislodged.

The calculation that Government employees, traditionally meek and reluctant to risk their job security, could be bullied into submissiveness by means of draconian Ordinances and large-scale deployment of police, has totally misfired. The Government and its propaganda tool, the All India Radio, may try their very best to create the impression that the token strike on September 19 was a failure, but they cannot hide from all the people the fact that Central administration was virtually at a standstill on that day. Nor is the public unaware that police zoolium commenced a day earlier in several places, leading to localised paralysis. It is also known that the terror methods adopted on the day of the token strike resulting in many deaths and hundreds being seriously injured and in thousands of Government employees being arrested and harassed, have had the effect of rousing the anger of the meekest and the softest among the employees. A few days back the employees of the Union Government were only resentful that the authorities were reluctant to reach a settlement on their legitimate demands; today they have utter contempt for a regime which imagines that working people can be crushed with the help of the police force.

The Prime Minister's broadcast a day after the token strike has only helped to deepen this contempt and anger. Her attempt was to make out that the Government employees were demanding privileges not available to the vast hungry millions of India, that she and her colleagues were greatly concerned about raising the level of all the peo-

ple in the country. Not only Government employees but all the people in India know the emptiness of this sanctimonious posture. They know that the plight of the under-privileged majority in this country has not prevented the Government from aiding and abetting the unconscionable growth of Big Business houses or from ensuring patronage and special privileges for the rural and urban rich. The steep growth in economic disparities has been the subject of public debate ever since independence, yet these have been increasing at the cost of the real wage of the worker which has been steadily eroded. The benefits of development have been deliberately channelled into a limited number of affluent pockets. In this context the Prime Minister's broadcast referring to the country as "a family" and asserting that the "immediate as well as future needs" of all the members of this family must be taken into account, can only be described as a piece of effrontery, as an exercise in hypocrisy of the worst kind. Smt Gandhi has only to consider her Government's record in the spheres of curbing monopolies, introducing monopoly procurement and State trading to end hoarding of and profiteering in foodgrains, nationalization of banking in order to secure locked

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up resources for development of the vast backward sectors of the national economy, prevention of corruption at the highest levels of administration and bringing about genuine popular participation in development programmes, to see the absurdity and falsity of her stance. When it is not making the least effort to bring relief and hope into the dreary and pointless lives of the country's impoverished millions, the Government has clearly no moral right to make these exploiting masses a pretext merely to deny a fair deal to its own employees.

By advancing such bogus arguments and by indiscriminate use of the police force to suppress a peaceful agitation for better conditions of service, the Government has only succeeded in increasing discontent in the ranks of Government employees a hundredfold; it has helped to pave the way for disruption of the administration at all levels. Home Minister Chavan has proved beyond doubt that he is incapable of statesmanship or even wisdom of a lower order. His conduct throughout this sordid business has shown that he has become totally dependent on the vicious bureaucracy. He has proved unequal to the special responsibility which his vital portfolio has placed upon his inadequate shoulders. That he would not take the help of the Labour Minister to find a way out of what is after all a labour problem is proof that he has come to believe that excessive force is all that is required to tackle delicate human situations. He may fancy himself in the role of a modern Shivaji making his way with the help of the sword, but the people have reason to wonder if the nation's interests are best served by his continuance at the helm of the Home Ministry. It is clearly time for a shake-up in which his bureaucrat advisers must also necessarily figure.

The most shocking part of the token strike affair is perhaps the fact, as reported in a section of the press, that the Union Government was on the point of dismissing the Kerala Ministry and taking over, on the basis of the Governor's report regard-

ing the State Government's unwillingness to launch an orgy of violence against Central Government employees working within its jurisdiction. More and more it is becoming clear that those in power at the Centre are thinking in terms of keeping themselves in office not only with the support of vested interests at home and abroad but by the use of the armed might of the State. Fortunately high-handed action in respect of Kerala was averted due to the cautious attitude of certain persons in the Cabinet. But the controversy now raging between the Centre and the Kerala Government as also the unilateral despatch of Central Reserve Police contingents to that State make it clear that a showdown cannot be far off. The lessons learnt over the years in that State, whose people have demonstrated time and again their democratic awareness, have been forgotten, and presumably must be learnt once more. But today's situation in the country is very different from that nine years ago; any attempt to dislodge the elected Government of Kerala by the misuse of the Governor and the Constitution will have repercussions all over India.

For the happenings before, on and after the September 19 strike, the entire Government, from the Prime Minister downwards, must bear responsibility. The defence of democratic rights has become the responsibility of all sections of the people in the face of the organised attack on the fundamental rights of the Government employees. The Union Government is guilty of a deliberate attempt to murder democracy and freedom. It is before the bar of public opinion, which cannot be permanently suppressed by means of Ordinances or lathis and bullets. Arrogant Ministers who behave like drunken dictators must pay the penalty. Thus have people asserted themselves in the past, and thus will they do so in the future. Today the democratic consciousness of the people is very much more alert than ever in the past; the punishment of those who seek to destroy democracy and crush movements for popular rights by force will be to that extent more drastic and final.

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

SAN'S CONSCIENCE

WHEN big preparations are being made for celebrating the Gandhi Centenary and when the Textile Labour Association which Gandhiji founded as well

as the Madras Labour Union, founded by Wadia, are celebrating half-centenary, it may not be inopportune to refer back and look into our past especially

about workers and their strikes. This might be somewhat irksome to people who have already soared to high positions and are apt to forget the past, and for whom

the Gazette of India Extraordinary carrying Ordinances is more easy reading than history books.

"Soon after our arrival in Switzerland, the General Strike broke out in England. I was vastly excited, and my sympathies were naturally all on the workers' side. The collapse of the strike, after a few days, came almost as a personal blow. Some months later I happened to visit England for a few days. The miners' struggle was still on, and London lay in semi-darkness at night. I paid a brief visit to a mining area—I think it was somewhere in Derbyshire. I saw the haggard and pinched faces of the men and women and children and, more revealing still, I saw many of the strikers and their wives being tried in the local or country courts.

"The magistrates were themselves directors or managers of the coal mines, and they tried the miners and sentenced them for trivial offences under certain emergency regulations. One case specially angered me: three or four women, with babies in their arms, were brought up in the dock for the offences of having jeered at the blacklegs."

These extracts are from a book which has moulded a whole generation of political workers in India to look deep into social problems and lessons of history—the *Autobiography* by Jawaharlal Nehru.

Those who don the Gandhi cap and the Nehru kurta might also feel bored to read another extract, about strikes in India, exactly forty years ago:

"Nineteen twentyeight had been full of labour disputes and strikes; nineteen twentynine carried on likewise....

"In the boom year, all went well for industry, though the workers carried on as before and profited little. But when the boom passed and it was not so easy to make large profits, the burden, of course, fell on workers. The old profits were forgotten; they had been consumed. And if profits were not now sufficient, how could the industry run?

"And so there was industrial unrest and labour troubles and gigantic strikes in Bombay which impressed everybody and frightened both the employers and Government. The Labour Movement was becoming class-conscious, militant and dangerous, both in ideology and in organisation. The political situation was also developing fast, and, though the two were separate and unconnected, they were partly parallel, and the Government could not contemplate the future with any satisfaction." (Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography*).

When we have just had a gigantic strike enveloping several lakhs of workers and employees, from one end of the country to the other, it would perhaps be useful to reflect upon the cause of these strikes. Of course, for the Prime Minister, as she spoke on All India Radio on September 20, there was no "strike" as such but only some "interested elements" had "misguided" a "small section of the employees into abstaining from work". This was more or less the assessment of the British Government about the strikes in 1928 and 1929 about which Jawaharlal Nehru wrote in his *Autobiography* and the way the then British Government

chose to act was to foist the Meerut Conspiracy Case.

The Prime Minister's public-relations men and the script-writers of the AIR who only the other day extolled the Human Rights Year in a special programme, would however be hard put to explain the provisions of the Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance, 1968—and more particularly, how the Magistrates trying the arrested employees inside jail and sentencing them are different from the arbiters of "justice" in 1926 British coalmines, acting "under certain emergency regulations" described by Jawaharlal Nehru.

The Congress Party's spokesmen and big employers have clearly seen "politics" in the Central Government employees' strike and to take the country four decades back, perhaps what at least some of them would like to see is only the formal framing of a conspiracy case.

According to experts on labour law, it is virtually impossible to conduct a "legal" strike in India. When such is the law relating to strikes (and as for Government employees they have in addition almost a permanent ban on strike or any form of collective action), the Home Minister's anniversary gift to the trade unions in India in their half-centenary year, is the most stringent anti-strike legislation ever brought on the statute book in this country.

Now, under this anniversary gift, an employee can be punished not only for going on strike as it is commonly understood but under the new definition, even for (i) refusal to work overtime where such work is necessary for the maintenance of any essential service; (ii) any other conduct

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which is likely to result in, or results in, cessation or substantial retardation of work in any essential service."

Case law on strikes has it that refusal to do overtime work cannot be construed as a strike but under the present Ordinance Raj, that would be an offence. Moreover, any "conduct" which might result in cessation or substantial retardation of work would be an offence. These provisions in the ordinance, it has been pointed out by legal experts, impose an unreasonable restriction on the fundamental rights of employees, guaranteed under Article 19 (1) (g) of the Constitution since no employee can be compelled to undertake work in excess of and contrary to rules, and thus virtually accept the imposition of forced labour.

Far worse are the provisions in the second Ordinance relating specifically to the railways. As the Joint Council of Action has pointed out, under this Ordinance "it is an offence to all that is decent in human relations; self-respect and human dignity require that it is opposed. To set one railwayman against another and permit one railwayman to arrest another is tantamount to creating anarchy in discipline, to giving licence to vindictive action, and offering scope for debasing human nature. For this reason *alone*, the Central Government employees would be justified in going on a strike."

It is an undeniable fact that irrespective of the percentage of "loyal" workers reporting for duty as put out by Government, the work of the Central Government establishments was at a standstill on September 19. In fact, the repressive measures under the Ordinance and the police interference even before the strike began had actually resulted in work stoppages from a day earlier in several cases. The vindictive measures of arrests, lathi-charges, police-firings etc., have resulted in further work stoppages or employees resorting to "work-to-rule." Incidentally, it is a measure of the Government losing its balance that it should threaten to ban "work-

to-rule" as illegal under its Ordinance *raj*.

Therefore, even the semblance of "normalcy" which Government could broadcast hides the real extent of dislocation caused by the massive strike of the Central Government employees. The after-effects and legitimate reaction to vindictive measures are still seen in many sectors, particularly in the P&T services. The police brutalities, the tool of police firings and the hundreds who have been injured, tell a gruesome tale about the achievements of the apostles of "non-violence" who were so vocal about the Gandhian edict of "arbitration" to resolve labour disputes except to settle the problems of their own employees.

The Prime Minister has expressed her grief at the loss of lives in the strike. But her thesis of some "interested elements" misguiding a small section of the employees had its inevitable logic when she rejected the basic demand for wage revision. Because, as she put it, "It would be unrealistic to presume that either the Government or the country as a whole is yet in a position to provide each citizen with a need-based minimum wage". And the Home Minister has told Opposition MPs that the law will take its own course, that is, a line of mass victimisation is being worked out.

Before the Government proceeds with its plan of action of having it out with the employees, it might be useful to recall what the present Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Dr D.R. Gadgil, said, way back in 1960, the year of the first strike of Central Government employees since independence.

"Professor D.R. Gadgil, the noted economist, yesterday (May 28, 1960) at Poona, observed that in such economic and political conditions as were obtaining in our country at present, it was 'the duty of the organised class to state its claim as powerfully and firmly as possible.'"

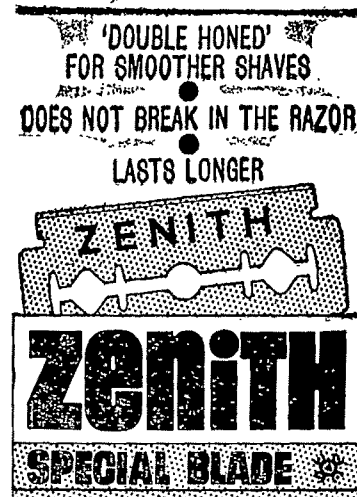
"The Director of the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (as Dr Gadgil was then) who was addressing a meeting of trade union workers convened by

the MES Employees' Union and the Life Insurance Employees' Union, declared that on a 'Government of our sort, pressures will count, for our Government has no strong or distinctive philosophy to direct democracy.'

"Earlier, while pointing out the faults in the Government's economic policy and practice, Prof. Gadgil made a scathing attack on the Government's failure to abide by the decisions arrived at at the tripartite conferences in which the Government had participated. He said that because the Government, who was the biggest employer, did not take these conferences seriously in practice, other employers also did likewise and hence 'this is a very serious problem, because it makes nonsense of the whole idea of the tripartite conference'." (*Indian Express*, Bombay, May 29, 1960).

Obviously, Sri Chavan has other ideas. By the rule of the *Danda*, he hopes to get the loyalty of the Government's own employees. It seems that neither historical experience nor political acumen is his strong point. If anything, he has earned for himself and the Government the smouldering hatred of all its more than twenty-five lakh employees.

September 23 *Observer*



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on the window ledge

Dated September 19, 1968

DEAR Srimati Indira Gandhi,

It's me, the widow. Don't bother to ask my name, nor my husband's, for all that mattered was that he fell three floors down to die. He was killed profitlessly. Perhaps that is the way all killing is done, senselessly and for no good. Perhaps I ought not to have pursued you with its hideousness right now when you are holidaying away, but I couldn't help it either, involved as I am in it. So are you, terribly, guiltily involved in the killing that day, when a nameless, faceless policeman chased my husband with something as mean as a stick, chased him to a third floor window, and then went on to do something grotesquely evil.

I say it again, grotesquely evil. My husband was beaten. It was something crude and degrading to do, but that perhaps was you. That perhaps was the degradation and crudity of the mechanism of a state which hadn't grown yet into anything more worthwhile than a mechanism. And in the slow deliberation of the wielding of the stick, in the slow pursuit in the small room, the slow terror, the small terror, in the reduction of a man to a very animal base of instincts, you achieved perfect suzerainty over him.

That, madam, is the vulgarity which great statesman escape by looking outside their petty frames of power for human credibility. Your father did it, and succeeded, perhaps in a limited sense. He failed only where he tried to be a renaissance prince in a country of men and women like my husband and me, men and women who cringe or fight for a squarer meal, for schooling for their children, for a quilt for their aged parents, for these measly little things, and in the cringing put up pathetic little fights and are pinned down like frightened creatures on the third floor window ledge. It is there, on that giddy perch, that you catch us.

It is from that perch that you push us down to our death. It is not even an act of violence on your part, but one of slow attrition of the spirit. You drive us slowly and without malice, without purpose, in sad and futile folly, on to the ledge. I can see that policeman who that day came flailing his stick in an almost existentialist gesture, and drove my husband to his window ledge.

Back in time, the setting was different. It was the arena. And it was the famished lion which came to the victim's precarious perch. And the emperor was there in person to watch the crude illus-

tration of his power. You were not there, but the news came to you in the sophisticated fashion of our times that my husband had been stripped of his human personality and in almost hideous terror sent down to his death. Like the emperor in the pavilion, you at your desk experienced the same gross vindication of power.

And perhaps, unlike the emperor because you have come a few centuries after, you experienced too, a curious backlash. An emptiness, a penumbra of remorse. You felt the ridiculousness of the power you wielded which could thus terrify men on window ledges and push them down to messy deaths three floors down.

If that is all that power can do, push terrified men down the window ledge, then it has got to succumb to itself. It can have no redemption. That is your tragedy, Indiraji. Perhaps we are to blame, we who forced on you an imagined mission, and let you preside over a wild clutch of men who are aliens to any liberal culture, and who, despite their ponderous tags of office, are as faceless and small as that policeman who came waving his stick to the window ledge. We have done you enormous wrong.

But let things take their course, and let men take their last terrified stands on window ledges, and fall three floors down to their deaths. And let all this find you the empress at her desk, a frail little widow yourself, receiving all this news of your power in sad, childlike incomprehension. Let all that be. But widowhood means to me something different from what it means to you. It is privation such as you have never known, nor your class will ever understand. It is my own window ledge, where I would stand with my children, where I would stand with a womanhood I cannot defend anymore against a faceless predatory world, and from where I will fall many, many floors down. Yet perhaps, if somewhere within you there remains something of the woman that has not gone altogether brittle, you might ponder on the hideous lesson of the window ledge.

Let me stop; the child cries. Again I wonder if you have ever understood what that means. It is for you that I ought to be crying now; you the victim, the martyr of the irrelevance of inhuman power, alienated from the meaning of things. What a dismal window ledge you are perched on!

Me, the widow.

Lessons of the Press Strike

C. N. CHITTA RANJAN

THE unprecedented strike by the journalist and non-journalist employees of the Big Business newspapers in the country, which lasted almost two months, did not produce the results it should have brought about. The first of its kind in magnitude, duration and intensity, the strike fully demonstrated the capacity of the 11,000-odd employees involved to stand solidly together and face privations for the sake of the collective cause. The morale of the employees was remarkably high throughout, despite the fact that most of them had not received the wages even for the 22 days they had worked in July. Considering the unity and determination displayed by them, the outcome of the strike must be considered entirely unsatisfactory.

The reference of the so-called wage dispute to adjudication by a national tribunal represents a setback not only for the employees directly concerned but also for all the working people and the trade union movement in India as a whole. It has been demonstrated beyond doubt that wage boards serve as no more than a convenient mechanism to help managements delay wage revision as long as possible, and at the end give as little as can be managed. There is no sanctity attached to acceptance and notification of wage awards by the Government, and employers are happy in the knowledge that the Government continues to be fully amenable to their pressure and influence.

Since the employers involved in this case are also the biggest industrialists in the country who

are known to control vital sectors of the national economy including banking, it has also become clear that we are still a long way from loosening the stranglehold of a handful of Big Business houses over the economy. The battle fought by the newspaper employees was no ordinary battle; it was a confrontation between the working class and monopoly capital. If it did not end in success for the workers, there are two main reasons: first, the total incapacity of the Government to stand up to pressure from the powerful vested interests; and secondly, the inadequacy of the leadership of the employees which failed to mobilise the massive public sympathy available in a big way so as to force a showdown.

The employees now realize that nothing will ever come of dependence on the Government as such or on the professed goodwill of highly-placed individuals. They realize more than ever before that in their solidarity and in the availability of effective and united leadership lies their salvation. That the realization of the futility of dependence on Government-inspired machinery is not confined to newspaper employees is borne out by the suggestion mooted recently by prominent trade union leaders for the withdrawal of trade union representatives from the wage boards for various industries set up by the Government, which have not yet completed their futile and pointless labours. It is necessary in the long-term interests of the working people that this move should be pursued vigorously.

To large sections of the public it would appear as if reference to a national tribunal of the "wage dispute" with "protection" for 75 per cent of the difference between present emoluments and the wages due under the non-journalists' wage award, is reasonable enough. The fact to be borne in mind is that the two wage boards for the newspaper industry—a statutory one for working journalists and a non-statutory one for non-journalist employees—were set up five years back and spent almost four years in drawing up the rates of wages and dearness allowance finally notified by the Government, after making certain modifications to please the employers, towards the end of last year. This was the first time that standardisation of wage structure for non-journalist employees was attempted on a national scale; working journalists had had the benefit much earlier, and in their case it was only a question of fair revision upwards.

The two wage boards set up for the industry had a common chairman and some common members. Their meetings were also held more or less simultaneously. It was pertinent to expect that the employers would adopt a reasonable attitude towards these, as their complaint before the Supreme Court in respect of the first wage board for working journalists (in 1958) had been that wage fixation for only one section of newspaper employees was harmful and would lead to discontent in the ranks of the non-journalist employees who formed the bulk. At that time the argument was that only

When wages for all categories were fixed the total burden on the industry could be fairly and accurately calculated. The fact however was that they wanted a whittling down of the rates prescribed; following the striking down of the award of the first wage board for journalists, the Government set up a wage committee made up of officials, which, naturally awed by the Supreme Court's verdict and scared of the influence of the employers involved, prescribed rates far lower than those laid down by the first wage board. If the employers did not revive their old argument and challenge this award, it was entirely because the rates of wages prescribed were very much lower than what they could comfortably pay.

Despite their pleas before the Supreme Court, however, when two wage boards were set up for the industry covering all its employees, the managements did their best to delay and render infructuous the work of the two boards. At one stage the two wage boards produced tentative proposals unanimously; the moment these proposals were published for comment, the organisation of the employers, the Indian and Eastern Newspaper Society, withdrew its representative and sent another in. The tentative proposals were then whittled down by applying pressure on the chairman. When the recommendations were finally ready, the employers' representatives took care to vote against the rates of wages fixed for the non-journalist employees; they were preparing the ground for refusing to implement the new scales.

The statutory award for journalists was notified in October last year, and the non-statutory one for non-journalists in November. Some of the medium and small newspapers gave early indication of their readiness to implement them. The IENS began applying pressure on these newspapers which depend on the organisation for various facilities. It was at this stage that Union Labour Minister Hathi began his efforts to bring about understanding between the managements and the employees. These efforts were

refused to failure, for the IENS from the beginning adopted a rigid attitude and flatly refused to advise its members to honour the two awards. In the talks that ensued one of the spokesmen of the IENS made it clear to the employees' representatives that whatever the fate of the journalists award, there was no question of implementing the non-journalists award. He made the tongue-in-the-cheek statement that the journalists' award was statutory and binding, while the other was not; even as this profound observation was being made, preparations were afoot under the aegis of the IENS to file writ petitions in the High Courts and the Supreme Court against the statutory award.

In view of the obstinacy of the employers' representatives the organisations of the journalists and non-journalists decided that a demonstration of solidarity was necessary. The IFWJ, the AINEF and the PTI Employees' Federation jointly called for a token strike on January 24: the token strike was a phenomenal success. Nevertheless, the employers were unbending. The rounds of talks held by Sri Hathi proved fruitless. Then came the call for an indefinite strike from April 23. Within hours of the commencement of the strike the IENS representatives signed an agreement with the employees' representatives in the presence of the Labour Minister, the terms being that the managements of all newspapers would pay 70 per cent of the difference between present emoluments and the wages due under the non-journalists' award, the balance to be settled by mutual negotiations within a month thereof. The employers, particularly the biggest ones, were obviously irked at having had to yield even to that extent. The strike was called off on April 24, but within a short time the IENS took the position that the "agreement" reached was not binding on its members. This was a clear call to the members of the IENS to violate the agreement.

Even so, the employees exercised great patience and made efforts for a negotiated settle-

ment. At one stage the IENS spokesmen agreed that any settlement should be binding on members, but on June 1, the IENS officially informed the AINEF that any such agreement, if reached, could only be recommendatory in character and not binding. Thus the employees were left with no alternative but to chalk out a programme of action to get the award implemented. Then followed the call for an indefinite strike from July 23.

Agitated over the turn of events, Sri Hathi called both sides for talks a little before the strike was to begin; but the negotiations failed as the IENS was not prepared to budge from its position. The president of the IENS flew to Calcutta and announced that the negotiating committee of the organisation stood dissolved. It was a deliberate challenge to the workers and a calculated defiance of the Labour Minister and the Government.

The strike was confined to newspapers in Classes I, II and III. This was logical, for the newspapers in these three classes are the most prosperous in the industry and are owned and controlled by the biggest industrialists in India—chiefly the Birlas, the Tatas, the Jains and the Goenkas. The issue involved was not merely the question of increased wages for newspaper employees but the future of wage boards as a dependable wage-fixing machinery. It was a challenge not only to the working class but to the Government which had conceived of wage boards as the best way of revising wages without tears. The employers in turn saw the strike as a challenge to their capacity to nullify the labours of wage boards not only in respect of the newspaper industry but also in respect of various other industries. It is to be noted that the owners of the newspapers involved in the strike are also in control of several industries for which wage boards have been set up by the Government.

Despite fervent professions

to the contrary, the Government did not feel committed to getting the notified wage award implemented, the reason being that some of the other wage boards cover industries in the public sector as well. The Government did not set any good example to the employers in the private sector by violating established convention to modify the unanimous recommendations

of the wage board for electricity undertakings. Apart from its own inhibitions in the matter, the Government was under constant and heavy pressure from agents of vested interests in the ruling party at the Centre against forcing a settlement that would displease the tycoons. This is borne out by the fact that the Government could not muster the courage to tell the newspaper

managements concerned that they should not expect advertisements from Government and quasi-government organisations if they persisted in defying the award. Nor did the Government even consider the question of withdrawal or suspension of the various facilities for which the newspapers depend on the Government. Even the massive
(Continued on Page 31)

Czechoslovak Crisis

GUS HALL

Mainstream has been publishing contributions on the Czechoslovakian crisis, embodying different points of view. Herebelow are excerpts from the report made by the General Secretary of the Communist Party of USA to the National Committee of his party on August 31, 1968.

THE crisis of Czechoslovakia has thrown into consideration a number of questions of great significance affecting problems far beyond its borders. They are questions affecting developments far beyond the present moment. They cannot be solved by oversimplified answers. They are complicated due to the fact that they are encased in contradictions and contradictory developments. These are questions of facts—but these are also questions of policy, of theory.

Emotional reactions are not a sufficient base for sound judgements of complicated questions. In moments like this, questions cannot always be resolved on the basis of what are momentary popular reactions to them. As you know, a revolutionary party must have the courage, if necessary, to stand up against a main current and even stand in opposition to positions taken by the non-Communist Left forces.

A revolutionary party must work to avoid such divergences and divisions, but if such a path is not momentarily available, then it must take the best possible course of action that will help to create the conditions of unity on principle at a later date. Unity on a position of opportunism is unity built on sand. This is one of the important elements that distinguishes a revolutionary from a liberal, from a reformer.

We seek ties and close relations with masses, but there are moments when a revolutionary party must take a firm principled stand regardless of its momentary effects on its public image or its relations with others. During such initial moments even the slightest evasion of a principled truth is rank opportunism.

An opportunistic position gets the usual flattery of the enemy, the momentary applause of the misled or the confused; but it soon erodes the foundation of confidence; it is deadly for the long haul.

In a basic sense, the questions that have surfaced in the Czechoslovakian crisis are problems related to the specific stage in the revolutionary transition from the world of capitalism to the world of socialism. They are questions related to the present economic, political and ideological level in the building of socialism. They are related to the balance-relationship between the world of capitalism and the world of socialism. They are questions of relationships between building socialism in one country, but within the framework of a world socialist community that is in struggle against world imperialism.

Any attempt to deal with the questions that have emerged as a result of the Czechoslovakian crisis by ignoring this reality surrounding it, is non-Marxist. They cannot be studied in isolation. There is no such thing as principled concepts that can be discussed in entirety in an abstraction. Abstractions and studies in isolation play an important part in any scientific probe but it is only one element of such a process.

Three Sides to Crisis

To ignore the reality of the surroundings and the relationship with the reality would lead nowhere. If the socialist world did not have world imperialism to deal with, its internal processes would be different, the relationships of the part to the whole would

be different in the world socialist family. What happens in Czechoslovakia affects this struggle.

At this stage of developments, it is necessary to deal with three sides of the crisis. First, the factors that led to the crisis; second, the problems that led to the military action by the five Warsaw countries; and third, the reaction of the Communist world to the crisis.

We did not panic; we did not permit ourselves to be swept up by the most massive efforts to blitzkrieg all forces, including our Party, into a worldwide anti-Soviet, anti-socialist binge. It is most interesting that the people in general were not swept into any hysterical movement. It was nothing like during the Hungarian events of 1956.

At a moment when the forces of imperialism are desperately combing and grasping for every possible scrap of material from "Communist sources" in order to use it in their attempt to panic the masses into supporting their reactionary aims, it places a special responsibility on Communists not to play their game. This consciousness is dictated by a class partisanship.

During the 1956 Hungarian events, the Socialists of Italy broke ranks and joined the reactionary crusade against the Soviet Union. Comrade Togliatti had some very interesting advice for them. I think it is as applicable today as it was then. He said: "I would like to say this to our socialist comrades as well as to my democratic friends—the place of the workingman; the place of the man of the people who has a sense of revolutionary reality, is on the side of the revolution and not on the side of reaction." And to this he added: "And then when the battle is won (when the crisis is over) we will continue to debate about the mistakes and on how to correct them—but above all—we must not lose the conception of the place of those who fight for socialism and for peace."

I am sure this reads as well in Italian as it does in English. It seems to me it is as good advice to Communists as it was to Socialists.

The second thoughts of many about the Czechoslovakian crisis, including some parties, have been corrections of their initial reactions. This is a form of criticism of their first thoughts. I think our second thoughts can only confirm the correctness of our first thoughts. I am happy to report to you that by and large our Party—the membership and the leadership—has reacted very well. Our Party membership did not break or panic.

Now, about the Czechoslovakian crisis, let me read to you an assessment of a past event: "the undermining of the Party by its rigid, doctrinaire and fanatical leadership, and by destructive and reckless

criticism, by vocational division, had gone so far that the enemies of socialism saw a perfect opportunity to overthrow the government altogether by annihilating the Marxist-Leninist Party."

That is from Comrade Aptheker's very correct assessment of what led to the Hungarian crisis of 1956. It is true that the crisis of Czechoslovakia is not an exact replica of the 1956 events, but it is also true that the events and the developments leading to it are painfully similar in many important ways. The weaknesses of the old leadership that led to serious difficulty; the mistakes made in the process of trying to correct them; the differences, discussions and factions in the Party leadership, and the ability of the anti-Socialist forces to use both the weaknesses of the leadership and the grievances of the people. The result in both situations was a creeping paralysis of leadership and a creeping political counter-revolution. In Hungary the process reached the point of explosion. In Czechoslovakia it would have followed a similar path.

A crisis developed in Hungary and in Czechoslovakia because the advice of Gomulka was not heeded, that is, "we must not allow anyone to use the process of democratisation to undermine Socialism."

The crisis in Czechoslovakia is a product of both the weaknesses of the old leadership and the mistakes of the new in the process of trying to correct the old mistakes. The need for democratic and economic reforms was not at issue in the crisis during the last weeks.

Many of the new mistakes resulted from not having a deep enough understanding of the nature of the old mistakes. For example, it is now obvious that in Czechoslovakia there are and have been, serious ideological weaknesses in the Party, in the mass organisations and among the youth. This must be laid at the doorstep of the old leadership. Their bureaucratic, administrative approach to problems contributed to this end. The ideological life of the Party and in the mass organisations became dehydrated.

Had the new leadership correctly assessed the seriousness of this weakness, it would not have made some of the new mistakes. The new leadership admitted in May of this year that they were surprised; that they were caught off-guard at the speed of the emergence of the anti-socialist upsurge, but instead of taking steps to head off the counter-revolution, they kept talking about how the people of Czechoslovakia were loyal to socialism. I am sure they were right, there was a loyalty to the ideal of socialism, but loyalty to socialism that is not organized and led to fight anti-socialist elements creates no assurance for the defence of socialism. Loyalty is only a feeling that must be organised and mobilised before it becomes political power.

Need for Reforms

More than any other socialist country, Czechoslovakia needed economic reforms. Their equalitarian wage system made a new system of material incentives almost impossible. The old leadership

The Thesis "Can a Country Have More Than One Communist Party?" by S.A. Dange which appeared in a series in Mainstream, June 1, July 6, 13, 20 and 27 and August 3, 1968 will be soon published in the form of a booklet. Those interested in getting copies may place their order with General Manager, Mainstream, F-24 Bhagat Singh Market, New Delhi-1

talked about reforms—but they tried gimmicks instead of a solution. The new leadership did not take the matter to the workers. They put forward ideas, that opened the path to non-socialist concepts.

More than any other Socialist country Czechoslovakia needed democratic reforms. There was a need to do away with the highly centralised state and Party systems. These were necessary changes in the Czechoslovakian situation. But the three problems—ideological weakness, the need for economic reforms and the need for democratic reforms—became in a sense a vicious circle. This was true in the period of the old leadership and it was true since last January.

It was difficult to make reforms in a situation where the people were not ideologically and politically prepared. In such a situation, anti-socialist forces can demagogically use the many processes of reforms and corrections. Such reforms even under the best conditions do create temporary dislocations and hardships.

Why is it that these problems did not show up before 1963? After 1948 Czechoslovakia had a period of unprecedented economic growth. In the period 1948 to 1965 their industry had a five-fold increase. Wages of industrial workers increased 127 per cent.

By 1965 they possibly had the highest standard of living in the socialist world.

This growth rate was possible because of the old industrial base, including a reservoir of skilled man power. It was possible because of its economic relations with the Soviet Union. The truth is that to a large extent the Soviet Union has subsidized the industrial development of most—if not all—of the other socialist countries.

The fast economic growth was a positive development. But this great expansion also covered up some defects. The annual wage increases for all workers served as a material incentive. The ideological problems did not show up as long as the economic expansion continued.

Pressure for Change

Problems of the democratic structure did not come to the surface in that expansive period. There is a limit, however, to this type of industrial expansion. It is limited by the available labour force. It is limited because of the need of capital for renewal of machinery and for new technology. It is obvious Czechoslovakia for some time should have had smaller annual wage increases and put more into industrial machinery and technological development.

Starting with 1963, the growth rate started to decline. The climb of real wages slowed down, reflecting this decline. Wages did not decline but the rate of growth did slow down.

It was at this point that some of the defects began to show up.

The declining rate in wage increases did not serve as the material incentive. The cumulative effect of the long period of poor ideological work began to appear. The people did not respond to administrative measures, including those that were necessary. The economy needed a rise in labour

productivity. For this it needed a system of material incentives.

The old leadership was not able to respond. The situation became increasingly critical.

The pressure for more basic changes in these critical areas grew in the Party, in the leadership.

It reached a critical point at the January meeting of the Communist Party.

Novotny and others were removed because of their refusal to work for changes.

During the expansive years, the bureaucratic ways of the leadership also did not come under sharp attack. Now all the pent-up grievances came to the fore. The new leadership should have opened up the path for a planned, orderly transition of economic and democratic reforms. Instead it opened up the flood-gates for a tide that created anarchy—a tide that swept in with it the forces of counter-revolution.

Since January the leadership faced the task of making corrections.

But the Party leadership became divided. The center forces of the leadership joined with the rightwing elements in the struggle against the left. In this process the rightwing elements moved into leadership positions. Under this pressure the policies of the Party, in general, moved to the right.

The Party had its guard up against the left danger, but its guard went down; it became paralyzed and helpless in the struggle against the right. Each new concession to the right elements only further opened the door to anti-socialist forces. When there is no effective struggle against a Right trend, there can be no end to its development.

The doors to counter-revolution were open as long as no one gave leadership in the struggle against these forces.

This situation created confusion and demoralisation in the ranks of workers and the Party. As this was happening, the leadership only used it to make further concessions to the Right. It became a vicious circle. With each concession the Right elements became bolder and without leadership the revolutionary elements became confused and demoralised. This situation continued for seven months.

During these months the parties of the other socialist countries had many discussions with the Czechoslovakian leaders. They urged them to end the drift to the Right. At each stage the Czechoslovak leaders agreed and promised to do something, but they never did.

II

IF one is to judge from the public speeches of some of the Czechoslovak leaders since the Moscow Agreement, these individuals do not seem to have changed their line.

It seems to me that such leaders are still appealing to the Right wing. They are blaming the Soviets for the steps they have to take now. This is not the way to mobilise the healthy, pro-Socialist forces. It seems these forces are again doing what they did before. They are not telling the people "there is a

forces. We must defend our socialism—we have to put an end to counter-revolution. Therefore, we want your support and active help in doing just that.”

They should explain that it is necessary to take action to curb reaction. They must announce the reason for these actions is not because the Soviet troops are present but because the anti-Socialist forces are present.

It seems such individuals are continuing the old mistakes, in this new setting. They are not giving leadership to the pro-Socialist forces. And to the anti-Socialist forces they are saying: “We are forced to take some formal steps against you—because the Russians are here.”

Classless Nationalism

Such a position cannot set into motion an ideological struggle for the defense of socialism. May be it is too soon to expect such a turn in the leadership but let us read Smrkovsky's speech returning from Moscow:

“We knew the world sympathized with us but that the big powers would accept a compromise rather than anything else. In these conditions we found ourselves in a dilemma with no way out.”

Is this not saying, “we expected big powers to act against the five socialist powers. The imperialist powers preferred to compromise, therefore, we had to compromise.” Is this the attitude of a Socialist man?

That is again an appeal to the Right—to backwardness and to materialism. More, it is itself classless nationalism.

Is it not an appeal to the backward?

Instead of condemning the attempts of world imperialism for its conniving attempts to interfere, for its support for counter-revolution, for its military manoeuvres, Smrkovsky says we had to agree because the imperialist Powers were not ready for a military confrontation. He is saying, “too bad for us because imperialism did not take military action.”

Was this not the meaning of the Czechoslovak foreign minister's actions at the United Nations?

President Svoboda in the name of the leadership sent him a message saying, “We do not need the United Nations. We are going to settle this between the Socialist countries.” The foreign minister received the message but arranged it so that he could say he received it after he made the speech at the UN, when in fact he received and knew the contents of the message long before he spoke.

It is clear many have yet to draw the necessary lessons—the lessons from the viewpoint of the class struggle, from the viewpoint of the struggle against world imperialism.

There are some differences in the events of 1956 in Hungary and today. The main danger in Hungary was the inaction of the Nagy leadership. It failed to act against a creeping counter-revolutionary movement and finally decreed the neutrality of Hungary. Each measure of retreat strengthened counter-revolution and in the end the Nagy Government became totally inoperative. It lost

the open “counter-revolutionary” forces. The weaknesses developed to their inevitable end when there was no struggle against them.

Today, because of the power of the socialist countries and their knowledge that the socialist states will not allow counter-revolution in Czechoslovakia as well as in other countries, the forces of imperialism have been working more cunningly. At this stage they have been supporting “progressive” movements, while they conducted terror and discredited the so-called “conservatives”, those who worked to maintain Marxist-Leninist concepts.

After these forces succeed in terrorising and eliminating Marxists-Leninists and creating non-Party leadership bodies in trade unions and in other people's organisations—as they have been doing in Czechoslovakia—then the problem of fighting counter-revolution becomes much more serious and difficult.

As in Hungary, the anti-Socialist forces in Czechoslovakia have had successes in using and bringing out all the disgruntled elements. This includes many who have legitimate grievances as well as unreconstructed dangerous elements.

Postponement of necessary economic reforms created problems, temporary unemployment. This was used for lining up workers. The extreme measures of expropriation and socialization, including one-man barber shops and also shoe repair shops, created a large disgruntled petty bourgeois sector. This was seen in the movement after, when thousands of people in Czechoslovakia made application to recover their properties. Some asked for the right of exploitation. *The Madison* (Wisc) Progressive magazine had a very interesting report from its writer in Prague which stated:

“If the young are impatient with the tempo of the New Communism, those elements on the Right which would like to go back, *not to Masaryk, but to Hapsburg*, are hopeful that extremism will push the door far enough to open to send the Communists through it and out, *and restore the dream of private ownership and private profit*. These are the middle-aged and even young people of this sort, born entrepreneurs, who for twenty years have knelt facing West to say their evening prayers. But the bulk of the rightist pressure is among the unreconciled elderly, certainly including a large minority at least, of churchgoers and clergy.” (*Issue of June 1968*).

A big Chicago business executive who left Prague before the tanks said: “It's a crime. The Czechs were ready to really move. They wanted to open their country to Western trade—Western methods. Several ministers told me how good it felt to be free. I did not feel I was dealing with Communists.” He left his business in the hands of his European agents, a West German national.

Also one has to remember that the Eastern European area has a history of backwardness and extreme nationalism. It cannot be overcome in 20 years, especially with poor ideological work by the Communist Party.

ed large institutes specialising in the use of nationalism in socialist countries. They are mainly staffed by ex-Left-wingers and liberals. And as we know, some parties in the Socialist world make their appeal to the nationalism of the people rather than on the basis of class and socialism. In this way they are trying to skip an ideological stage. They do not build a reservoir of anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist ideology.

Is this not so in Yugoslavia and Romania? With this imperialist appeal they are leaving the ideological door wide open. This weakness will come to haunt these Parties.

How else could we explain the disgraceful fact that an organised committee representing Prague students took an official apology to the US Embassy because some North Vietnamese students demonstrated in front of their building. They collected money and bought an American flag to replace the one the Vietnamese had burned and they presented it to the US Embassy and applauded while a US Marine hoisted the flag to the pole.

Most likely the CIA paid for the flag, but what is important is that they were able to get Prague students to present it. Some of these same Prague students physically attacked the North Vietnamese students who were picketing in Prague against US imperialist aggression.

This unbelievable tale is further emphasised by the fact that last January, the Communist Party under the Novotny leadership organised a youth demonstration against US imperialist aggression in Vietnam. It was later found out that some students and youth organisation leaders had organised a boycott of the demonstration. Because of this, about 100 students showed up at the demonstration.

No Counter-Measures

This is political ideological backwardness, it is classlessness. This is only an example of deterioration and the illusions about US imperialism. Such elements are not devoted to Socialism. One is compelled to ask: Is this a solid base on which to rest the defence of socialism? Is this not fertile for counter-revolution—for confusion?

What further adds to the danger is that the new leadership took no counter-measures against these unbelievable actions by Prague students. They played it down as if it had no meaning.

What were some of the other forms of counter-revolution? The rightwing Social-Democratic Party organised its ranks into a national center and into a number of clubs. It announced a date for its national convention; it received money from abroad. It published a newspaper, issued statements, leaflets. It was openly anti-Soviet and openly harangued against the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

The Club 231 movement became gathering places for counter-revolutionaries. This movement was based on ex-prisoners and also included relatives and friends of ex-prisoners. One must keep in mind that members of these clubs did not only include persons who had been unjustly placed in

had been released from prison. They held meetings—they had TV interviews with US and West German TV networks.

CIA-established Organisations

In Czechoslovakia since January, as if from nowhere, a number of organisations came to life. In this connection it is interesting that the ex-CIA head of the division supervising the softening-up of Socialist and newly independent countries, in outlining the organisation forms which he supervised, stressed that wherever possible, counter-revolutionary operations should proceed through established organisations that have mass support, organisations that have a legitimate reason to exist.

In Czechoslovakia old organisations that had been in mothballs for years were revived. This is the case of the Czechoslovakian Anti-Fascist Federation. Obviously there was a time when it must have played a progressive role. Many of the leaders have been members of it. Now it was re-organised and their bulletin states that it now is *an action organisation* that it is now a *political organisation*, and states that its task is the "*persistent elimination* of all elements of deformation as well as *those who have caused it.*"

This was a plan for terror against Communists. It became the basis for organising veterans into an anti-Socialist formation. Interesting that in their material there is not one word defending or building socialism. They were calling for a nationwide rally in October.

There took place the reorganisation of the Slovak Democratic Party. It also openly called for elections in Czechoslovakia "to be supervised by the US, Britain and France." They called for the return of collectivized farms to former owners by October 1. They called to ban the Communist Party and the Communist Party press.

The old Sokol sports organisation and the boy and girl scouts were organised for the struggle. These forces could have been nipped in the bud, but again as in Hungary, the Communist Party was paralysed by factional fighting. The top leadership of the Czechoslovakian military cadre was demoralised by factions and factional struggles. The security forces were confused and demoralised. The border guards did not know what the policies were. Communist Party members received no leadership and they received no protection in spite of the increasing attacks.

In this growing confusion, anti-Socialist elements took over the leadership of local government bodies; they took over leadership of organisation and most important, for months had control of the press, radio and the TV. And for some time not a voice of resistance, of opposition to this direction of developments was heard in Czechoslovakia. The open anti-Socialist forces became bolder. It seems to me the thing was slowly getting out of control.

The week before the military action by the Warsaw Pact countries, there were ten to twelve thousand West Germans in Czechoslovakia. The

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Policies, Party and Administration

SATYAPAL DANG

ON July 30, 1968, Sri Hanumanthaiya of the Administrative Reforms Commission, speaking to the press stated that there was too much political interference in administration and that this had grown especially during non-Congress Ministries.

The allegation of political interference in administration is in fact levelled most frequently by all types of politicians against others, generally without being clear as to what this allegation exactly means. The Gill Government in Punjab was accused of this by every Opposition party and group, and people at large believed the accusation to be quite true. Yet, Sri Kartar Singh, a member in the Gill Cabinet and leader of the House speaking in Punjab Vidhan Parishad on May 23, 1968 levelled this very allegation of political interference in the work of police against the Leader of Opposition in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, Shri Gurnam Singh. Even Sri Hanumanthaiya did not care to explain as to what he meant by 'political interference in administration'. That there exists tremendous amount of confusion as to what it really means would be clear from the instances given below.

1. A few years ago for various reasons a big agitation developed in Chheharta (Punjab) against a particular shopkeeper who happened to be a Congressman. The spokesmen of the workers was the President of their powerful trade union. Immediately after the agitation was over, the police started investigations into a complaint by another person (A) alleging that he (President of the Union) was in possession of a cow which

had been stolen from his (A's) house long ago. The President produced it and handed over to a police officer the receipt for the amount paid by his brother to the person (B), from whom the brother had purchased the cow. 'B' appeared before the police, corroborated fully the President, explained from where he had taken the cow in question and took full responsibility for the same. It was also discovered that 'A' had not lodged a complaint with the police or any other authority about his cow having been stolen. Despite all this, the police left no doubt in our mind that a case would be registered, come what may. This was denounced in public meetings. Deputations waited upon district authorities to protest against the false case. I met a top police official twice in this connection. At first, he assured me that he would go into the whole matter and if the case was really false he would see that it was not proceeded with. Second time I met him, he threw up his hands, and frankly told me that he was helpless in the matter. This meant that he had orders from above. The case was registered and was sent to the court. It was contested. The police officer who was given the receipt denied that it was ever given or even shown to him, when he was asked to produce it in the court. Notwithstanding that, the case failed and the President was acquitted.

Some Congress leaders as also some officials had the audacity to allege that our denunciation of the false case in public meetings and our deputations etc. constituted "political interference in administration".

2. During the United Front Ministry in Punjab last year, a woman was found dead in her husband's house in Majitha in Amritsar district. The husband and his parents said it was a case of suicide. The local police officials 'agreed' with them. The entire town protected and observed hartal saying it was a case of murder. The police would not agree. The Istri Sabha which had been agitating on such cases even when Congress was in power took up the matter. Ultimately the police registered the case of murder. One top police officer however told some people that he did so because of "political interference in the administration". (One of the leaders of the Istri Sabha being related to a Minister of the UF Government, that he was not convinced that it was not a case of suicide but of murder). The case was tried by a judicial magistrate. Most of the proceedings took place after the fall of the UF Government. The accused were found guilty and convicted, vindicating the stand of the people of Majitha at whose instance the Istri Sabha had taken up the case.

3. During the United Front Government in Punjab, I received representations from some employees of one of the departments in my charge in the matter of transfer. Some others had been done undue favours at their cost and contrary to rules. In cases in which I found the complaint to be genuine I reversed the orders of the officers. Some of the officers grumbled that there was "too much interference in their work", that the "Minister should not interfere in such small matters".

4. I know some so-called "Congress workers" who are in league with corrupt police officials. They earn money by a novel method. At first, by various means they get various people hauled up by the police. They then come forward to 'help' them to prevent registration of cases against them. And for this they take money from them for giving to the officials. Actually, they share the money with the corrupt officials. Sometimes it happens that an innocent person so trapped refuses to take the help offered but seeks the help of his trade union or someone in whom he has faith and who does not tell him that money is needed to grease someone's palm. When his cause is pleaded by such an organization or such a political worker, the corrupt police officers often allege "political interference".

Many more instances can be given to show that often the corrupt officers and politicians allege 'political interference' whenever some organization or party stands in the way of their wrong and corrupt deeds.

On the other hand, here are certain instances which constitute clear "political interference" in administration.

1. The minority Government of Punjab headed by Sri Lachhman Singh Gill issued orders to the District authorities to realize all outstanding tacavi loans from peasants, rich or poor. The officers were told that their work would be judged by the amounts realized by them. District authorities started implementing the job and often would not agree to give time even to the extremely hard cases. A landlord supporter of one of the Ministers in a particular district had quite a handsome amount standing against his name. The officer in charge asked him to pay up. The landlord made known to the officer his standing with the Government. The young officer would not care for that and treated him as he had treated others. Within a few days this officer received transfer orders to a far off place.

2. The Gill Government in Punjab asked a number of police

officers in the State to register (false) cases against various political opponents of Sri Gill. Some refused to frame and register false cases. They were victimised by way of inconvenient transfers, virtual demotions, etc.

3. Quite a number of instances are known in Punjab in which Ministers or MLAs of the ruling Congress Party have interfered in the police investigations in cases of murder, murderous assault, etc. not to save innocent persons being harassed unnecessarily but to prevent some likely culprit being hauled up because they have been their supporters. If a similar thing is attempted by an opposition MLA—and there may be cases like that—it would be equally wrong and it too would be a case of undue political interference in administration.

At the same time there may be a case in which a corrupt police officer has ganged up with real culprits and is deliberately leading the investigation on wrong tracks. Not often such a police officer gets a better hearing from his boss than the aggrieved people. If in such a case, the Minister incharge were to intervene to effect, say, the transfer of such an officer and to replace him by another officer of known integrity, some would call it "political interference in administration" but obviously it would be fully justified, correct and necessary.

Two important conclusions emerge from the various examples given above:

First when political power or political influence is used or sought to be used to get one or the other official to do something that is wrong, unjust, contrary to rules or against his own conscience, it is something that is undesirable and deserves condemnation.

Secondly, if one were to accept the proposition that the Government of the day (formed by a political party or a coalition of political parties enjoying majority support in the legislature) should only lay down broad policies and their actual implementation should be left to the

administrative machinery, that would lead to unbridled rule of bureaucrats in no way answerable to the people. Such a position would also be unjust to the ruling party because the ultimate responsibility before the people for all the good deeds as well as misdeeds of the officials is that of the government of the day. Many people when they decry "political interference in administration" want real power to vest in the hands of bureaucracy. No real democrat can accept such a position. The Government of the day—Ministers incharge of various departments—must have the power to supervise and effectively control the implementation of their policies and decisions by the officers. And they must exercise this power to prevent sabotage of their policies by the bureaucrats and also to ensure that the officials act justly and honestly.

Those opposed to this concept argue that officials are supposed to keep themselves above politics so that they can faithfully implement even diametrically opposite policies with changes of Government. In actual reality, this concept works only when change of Government does not mean a basic change in policies. Officers coming from landlord class and used to serving them all their lives cannot implement faithfully policies directed against landlords, especially if implementation is left to themselves alone. Many instances to prove this point can be given but that is hardly necessary.

Many supporters of bourgeois democracy, however, would raise the cry: "If the administrative machinery is not to be independent of the Government it would mean monopoly of power and all positions by the ruling party, and this is what the Communists want when they come to power."

Let us first see the present position in our country.

1. Doors of all the services are supposed to be equally wide open to all citizens irrespective of their political views or class origin. At the same time, however, the Government of India

have powers under the Constitution of India to issue executive orders instructions to bar the entry into services of all those suspected to have Communist or other "subversive" connections and even views. And this power has by no means remained on paper. The bourgeois rulers of India, therefore, cannot claim that they have pursued an above-class policy in the matter of recruitment to services.

2. The Constitution of India provides for the obligatory appointment of the Union Public Service Commission as well as Public Service Commissions in the States. They are supposed to make appointments strictly on merits and they are supposed not to be influenced by the Government of the day. Yet what is the state of affairs in actual practice? Here are some instances from Punjab.

One of the present members of the Punjab Public Service Commission was appointed when the Congress was in power. It is no secret that he was appointed by the then Government because he was a near relative of the then Chief Minister. Another member—an officer—was appointed by the Gill Ministry. An ordinary PCS officer, very much junior in the list, he was appointed as a reward for the help he rendered to Sri Gill in the political field to come to power and also because he could be fully relied upon by the Chief Minister to carry out his wishes. The officer in question is a very class-conscious officer having close links with some transporters as well as landlords.

It is hardly necessary to point out that such a Public Service Commission cannot be expected to act justly and without any political or class bias.

3. There is also the fact that the State Governments have the power not to accept the recommendations of the Public Service Commissions and even to take any number of posts out of their purview. The only justification for the latter can be that the ultimate responsibility being that of the political party in power, the Government if it

to make appointments in certain key positions with a view to ensure that its policies are carried out. In actual practice, this power has been misused by Congress Governments for favouritism, nepotism, etc.

4. Even under the present Constitution, the Ministers have a good deal of power and control over the officers.

In other words, the supposed complete independence of the administrative machinery in bourgeois democracy that prevails in India today is a myth.

The bourgeois farmers of India's Constitution were far-sighted enough to ensure subordination of bureaucracy and administrative machinery to their Government. If the Congress Government has relied more on bureaucracy than on the people, and has refused to curb its excessive powers—that is because it suited the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie.

Finally, there is the important question as to what should be the relationship between the party in power and the administrative machinery in a society in which power is in the hands of the working classes under the leadership of the Communist Party and in which socialism is being built. This in my opinion is a matter which requires a good deal of discussion on the basis of the actual experience of the Socialist countries. Perhaps the position taken by the new leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in this respect is one of the those points on which sharp differences have arisen between the C P of Czechoslovakia on the one hand and some other Communist Parties on the other. In the concrete situation of our country, I think that the following pattern should prevail in the Socialist India of future:

1. Appointments to various services must be strictly on merits. Communist as well as non-Communist citizens must have equal opportunities or rights to be appointed. Public Service Commissions need to be made really independent and capable of acting justly and on merits.

guaranteed security of service. Provisions in the Constitution of India in this respect need to be strengthened.

3. The Government now have the power to make appointment to certain key posts to ensure effective implementations of its policies. It must also have the power to remove in accordance with a prescribed procedure officers who are incapable of implementing the policies of the Government and persist in sabotaging them.

4. The Government must be in a position to exercise effective control over the functioning and work of the administrative machinery.

5. Elected committees of the people and or mass organizations should have the power of control and supervision over officials at various levels. In many cases powers at present exercised by bureaucrats can be entrusted to such committees, as for instance the power to allot and control depots, the power to distribute surplus land among the landless, etc. etc. Where it is not possible to give statutory powers to such committees, there should be at least advisory committees.

6. While the Party will have to ensure faithful implementation of the policies of the Government by the administrative machinery the services and the officials should not be required to take orders from the Party Committees in their day-to-day work. They should be able to function on their own, with initiative and in accordance with the legal procedures. The Party must ensure its leading role by evolving correct policies, by mobilizing mass support for them, by Communists in the administration acting selflessly, honestly and efficiently in the interests of the people, and by the Party Committees, taking steps to see that mistakes and wrongs whether committed by Communists or others are exposed and corrected.

The fact of being a Communist should mean more responsibility and not any special privileges or extra-legal powers.

Emerging Patterns on Trade Union Scene

M. ATCHUTHAN

JUST on the eve of the country's independence, top leaders of the Congress Party took a major political decision to constitute under its tricolour flag, a national trade union centre, challenging the hegemony of the Red Flag of the AITUC which was then dominated mostly by the militant Left in the political movement including the Communists. That was how the INTUC was born. Very soon, the membership of the INTUC was "verified" by the Chief Labour Commissioner and certified as the most representative trade union organisation in India, fit to represent Indian labour in the ILO.

In recent years, however, a serious discussion has been going on in INTUC ranks as to what the INTUC's relationship with the Congress Party should be. The INTUC leaders have, of late, asserted that their organisation is independent of any political party although they largely agree with the Congress in respect of political programmes and policies.

The trade union scene in India today is very different from the situation that existed two decades ago. The Indian trade union movement is itself half a century old this year, commemorating the founding of the Textile Labour Association by Mahatma Gandhi at Ahmedabad and of the Madras Labour Union by Sri Wadia at Madras—both in 1918. The Trade Union movement is also fortunate in having in its ranks veterans from among those pioneering groups who built the trade unions facing great odds under a colonial regime. The office-bearers of the national trade union centres have in most cases a record of three to four decades (and some even more) of

service in building up the movement. Some of them occupy important positions in Left-wing political parties, and some in the leadership of the Congress Party also have a trade union background. The trade unions were once nurtured in the raging fire of political struggles of the pre-freedom days. They now constitute a political force on their own.

A pronounced de-linking from traditional moorings in respect of individual trade union centres is now very much evident, confounding some age-old concepts and debunking facile criticisms. Those two much-used words nowadays—proliferation and polycentrism—also appear quite relevant to describe the situation in the Indian trade union scene: while the national TU centres have defied attempts at non-proliferation and we have now eight or more of them, besides "independent" centres, the Big Three, that is, the INTUC, AITUC and HMS have now lost their monolithic political unity and have become coalitions of diverse political trends.

But what is often missed by most observers is the fact that in terms of organisation potential (and to some extent the 'organised labour') those outside the national TU centres now comprise a substantial chunk. For instance, the nearly 50 lakh workers and employees in Posts and Telegraphs; administrative services of the Central Government and State Governments, Education and in quasi-government institutions have their own separate trade union organisations (it is not, however, true that all of them are members of these bodies) and are not part of the national trade union centres.

According to the Draft Outline of the Fourth Plan, the organisation potential for the trade unions was estimated at 2.6 crores, towards the end of the Plan period. The 1967-68 employment market data gives a figure of 1.63 crores excluding employment in private sector units employing less than 10 workers. Some estimates broadly put the figure at around two crores. As against this, the total claim of the four national TU centres, that is, INTUC, AITUC, HMS and UTUC is around 41 lakhs. In other words, they represent about 20 per cent of the organisation potential. And the TU centre with the largest claim, that is, the INTUC (claiming about two million) has just 10 per cent of the organisation potential if claimed membership is taken and about six per cent if the verified membership is taken into account. This is considered representative enough for the purpose of sending delegations to the ILO to represent Indian labour, according to the Government of India!

An analysis of employment market data would show also that out of 163 lakhs accounted for, which we take as broadly equivalent to organisation potential, 96.34 lakhs are in public sector and 66.84 lakhs in private sector. The most significant development in the last few years has been the remarkable development of trade unionism among the State Government employees, including teachers and quasi-government employees whose number would be around 40 lakhs. And as in the Posts and Telegraphs, where the trade unionism embracing some 3.5 lakhs has no problem of internal rivalry and multiplicity of trade unionism,

trade unionism has largely escaped the divisive influences and have remained united. Those who magnify the problem of "inter-union rivalries" or of "multiplicity" of trade unions in India perhaps completely overlook this fact.

Another aspect of the trade union scene is that the membership claims of the national TU centres are not strictly comparable. For instance, the non-recognised unions suffer great disadvantages in enrolling mass membership and thus the TU centres which have official support and recognition have an edge over the others. Again, the affiliation of unions by industry varies a good deal in respect of the four centres. Some centres prefer not to affiliate unions in certain sectors apprehensive of possible disruption of the movement or for other reasons. In the case of the AITUC, according to a study, the organisation does not draw any membership from sectors of employment covering 75 lakhs, as against the employment market data figure of 163 lakhs. In the case of the HMS, it draws bulk of its membership from the Railways and Ports and Docks where their affiliates are recognised unions in most cases. The recognised union status in Plantations, Textiles, etc. (in areas in Maharashtra, MP, Gujarat where INTUC unions have statutory recognition) give the INTUC a very big lead over the others. Thus, no national TU centre can claim to be fully representative of all sections of Indian labour and only all of them together, along with independent unions, can be sufficiently representative of Indian labour especially when the rate of unionisation is roughly 20 to 30 per cent in most sectors.

The quality of industrial unionism in India, in a situation of plant-level and industry-level multiplicity of unions, also requires a deep probe to assess the main trends. Although the unions affiliated to the national TU centres are essentially organised on 'industrial' as against 'craft' basis, it often happens that these industrial unions tend to become

certain categories following one flag and certain others a different flag. In UK, and several other countries, craft-based unionism, gives a union structure similar to the 'multiplicity' at the plant level, with separate unions negotiating for separate categories. The levels of the TU movement, its effectiveness and organisation, are of course vastly different in UK compared to the situation in India but rival industrial unionism of the type we have exists in several countries as in France, Italy, etc. The point which, therefore, emerges is that problems of 'multiplicity' are not as formidable in this country as are often made out to be.

With public sector trade unionism (including the departmental employees of the Central and State Governments) now providing the new growth element, with relatively less problems of internal rivalries, and trade union actions increasingly enveloping whole industries and sectors rather than plant level or local level actions, new patterns of qualitative changes in the structure of Indian trade unionism are bound to emerge and are, in fact, slowly emerging. This is conditioned by the changing structure of the labour force itself, created by the new industrialisation and the larger influx of the educated young workers into industrial employment. The trade union movement has been able to create its own internal leadership to a considerable extent and here, again, the public-sector trade unionism has a distinct lead.

The remarkable upsurge in trade union consciousness is broadly reflected in the extensive growth of the TU movement but this is all the more significant in the case of the State Government employees who have virtually no freedom of association under the archaic Civil Service Conduct Rules. The employees have braved certain victimisation by defying the Rules and in launching on agitations and strikes and have secured de facto recognition of their right of association and collective bargaining. All these tend to indicate the

serious limitations on trade union freedoms which exist in India and have posed issues before the nation as to how best and how speedily measures should be taken to guarantee unfettered trade union rights, as an integral part of upholding democratic norms and practices.

The indications are that the trade union movement has acquired sufficient dynamism to resolve the problems of its further growth in a more intensive way on its own initiatives just as its development on the extensive field has been largely accomplished over wide sectors. This is not to underrate the formidable obstacles which have to be surmounted, especially the political factors and the official policy which limits freedom of association and collective bargaining rights.

Most crucial in this respect is the much-discussed problem of the procedure to ascertain the representative character of unions for the purpose of recognition. It has been rightly held that the present procedures of "verification" of membership has helped only to perpetuate the imposition of officially-sponsored or employer-sponsored unions on unwilling workers. All trade union centres (except INTUC) and leading employers' organisations, some of the public-sector managements, etc., now favour ballot among workers to ascertain the representative character of unions—the only democratic method, conferring the right on the workers themselves to choose their union for collective bargaining purposes. The extension of the democratic principle of ballot would promote the forces of unity. The AITUC has proposed that as a firm initiative for unity, the union which gets the largest number of votes should offer to take in representatives of other contesting unions on its executive, in proportion to their voting strength.

Such a gesture on the part of the majority union will help build maximum unity of the workers around their union and this process will eventually lead to unification at industry and all-India level.

SECULARISM AND INDO-PAK RELATIONS

OF late, especially since the disclosure of the arms deal between Moscow and Islamabad, *Mainstream* has been rightly devoting much space and attention to the problems of our secularism and Indo-Pak relations.

What is distressing, however, is that with all its alertness and courage of imagination, *Mainstream* treats the subject rather ritualistically. The self-critical edge of views expressed is either nominal or totally absent.

To cite an instance, S.C. in his review of Zafar Imam's *Hindusthan Ka Mussalman Kya Kare* in the issue of July 6, 1968, deplores the failure of the author to have approached the problems of his hapless community from the class angle. He says that it is not enough for one to exhort the Muslims to join the Leftist forces, particularly the two Communist Parties, and fight for the nation's secular objectives: "It has got to be a class call," because "the bulk of the Muslim population in India belongs to the working class and the class-consciousness is the surest means to neutralise the disruptive pulls of various vertical loyalties."

This sounds all right so far as it goes. But how is it that S. C. with all his robust faith in Marxist disciplines did not think it worth his while to turn the spotlight on the following questions of undeniable, if not of more vital, relevance to the phenomenon he was dealing with?

1. Who can at this late hour of the day issue and who only reinforce a class call to a

community that is largely *working class*?

2. How is it that the proletariat of India, which can claim almost a century long record of glorious fighting in every sector of the class front, has today in its ranks a very sizable section awaiting a class call from the leaders of the religious community to which it happens to belong?

3. Did those workers who are Muslims stand aloof when their comrades from other communities, mainly Hindus, were fighting the battles that today form a heroic heritage? Even S. C. won't say so.

4. Then why is the Muslim section of the Indian working class, which played its due part on the class front in the past and is surely not idle when there is a battle on any unambiguous economic and political issue, is in a torpor in the secular sector?

S. C. makes another point that steers clear of other peculiarities of no little validity. He says: "Any organised efforts to disseminate socialist ethos and Marxist world-view among the masses of the Muslims ought to aim at disinfecting them from the opportunistic and conservative leadership....."

Now leaving aside the riddle of who is to make this organised effort etc., how can anyone imbue any section of the Indian population with the Marxist-world view and uproot it from its old moorings when the working class as a whole is unable to say or do anything secular, socialist or internationalist enough

at any level to evoke support sympathy or at least nodding approval from its counterpart in Pakistan?

The working classes of India and Pakistan are not merely the two units of the world proletariat, striving for the same class objectives everywhere. They have a common past and, so long as the imperialist stranglehold on the subcontinent persists, many common tasks to perform. If neither their words nor their deeds are amounting to joint blows at imperialism at any point, does it not obviously mean that the Marxist world view has a gap to fill here before it can be made to bear all the desired fruits?

Mainstream was not exaggerating it when it said in its editorial on June 29 that the "biggest single threat to national identity and cohesion as well as to the secular-democratic foundation of our polity is posed by the forces of communalism." It was just as well that the warning was reinforced in the following words by Sri Amarnath Vidyalkar in his article containing quite a few home truths in the issue of August 10: "Lately, communalism in India has been adopting an aggressive posture. We must boldly resolve to accept this challenge."

Hindu communalism is indeed a menace of the first magnitude and unless we fight it with might and main at all levels, it will one day invite some disaster. But can we lay its ghost without tracing its main source of strength?

As Amarnathji takes note of, Hindu communalism has become the challenge only *lately*. To categorise it, it is essentially a post-independence phenomenon. This being the case, is it not incumbent that inquiry should be made into it from the following two angles:

1. Has Indian nationalism, which was always predominantly a Hindu affair in its personnel at all levels, started showing its cloven hoof now that we are free, as indeed imperialism wanted and many from among the Muslim upper classes feared it would? or

2. Is there any relation of vital importance between rising Hindu communalism and the vicissitudes of the country's working class movement culminating in the almost total absence of an organised offensive from it against this minatory evil?

One of the things that have helped to rub off the edge of our self-critical view is our national petulance at imperialism having sowed the seeds we are reaping in the form of communalism and Indo-Pak incompatibilities. In fact one of the main causes for our progressive opinion getting shocked and lacerated at the Soviet readiness to supply arms to Pakistan is that the former, being a socialist country, should not have overlooked that the latter, to put it in the words used by K. D. Ganesh in his sober and weighty article on the subject in the issue of July 27, is "a creation of imperialism to weaken Indian independence."

Imperialism would not be the devil it is if it did not do all that it is accused of. This being the case, would it not be a sign of our maturity and strength to find out why our anti-imperialist nationalism proved so vulnerable in the secular sector? And is it also not a fact that the party to have a greater reason than anyone else to probe it is the working class?

No matter how Partition came about or who are its main victims and beneficiaries, the fact remains that in it the working class of the subcontinent has suffered the greatest defeat of its

history inasmuch the fact that its two units cannot even say hallo to each other across the newly-created international boundary, much less coordinate their life-and-death struggles against imperialism and the rest of the anti-revolutionary forces of which there is a surfeit in this part of the world.

It is incumbent here to point out that the role of the working class in sharpening the anti-imperialist vigour and vision of our nationalism was not insignificant during the struggle for freedom. The famous Tilak Day strike in 1908, which was applauded by no less a person than Lenin himself, had been staged as a retaliation against an attack not on any working class movement but on our incipient nationalism. What is more, this stupendous demonstration of our anti-imperialist nationalism was made when our national forces were in disarray owing to the Surat split in the leadership of the Congress on the one hand, and on the other imperialism had scored a major victory in having the Muslim League born by methods that was to be later described as a "stage managed show" by Maulana Mohammed Ali.

But the peculiarity about that strike that claims our attention most is that all through the years prior to it the working class had been preoccupied with bettering its own lot which was unimaginably appalling, and the target of that struggle was largely millowners among whom Indians predominated, at any rate in Bombay, the city that figured above all in 1908. Although opinion is likely to differ, it can be said that the working class as it were instinctively followed Lenin's famous precept to march separately and strike unitedly.

The forty years that lie between the Tilak Day strike and Partition were not just ordinary ones. They saw the most spirit-stirring vicissitudes of civilization that have today ushered in the space era with one-third the world under buoyant socialist economy and most of the rest constituting what is known as the arena of national liberation struggle.

Is there nothing about all this to focus attention on the defeat the Indian proletariat has suffered owing to its lack of ideological weapons to further the secular cause?

Varanasi

D. C. Home

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the anniversary

'To the Revolution,' said Charvaka in his best diplomatic cocktail manner. 'Drink, ladies and gentlemen!'

He raised his glass of water from a lift irrigation system flavoured gently with delicenced fertiliser.

The guests gulped their drinks down; and these included the Prime Minister as the Chief Guest, the Food and Agriculture Minister, the former Minister for Petroleum and Chemicals, Kitchen Cabinet boys, distinguished and honoured chefs, planners, intellectuals, professional youth, amateur theatre characters and a certain number of sundry invitees.

'A great Revolution has taken place,' said Charvaka, solemnly, 'the Glorious Socialist Wheat Revolution. Today is its first anniversary, and its enemies, who are many, who sought to subvert and destroy it are today convinced that nothing can remove the nascent wheat power from the face of the earth. On this great day, I invite the Prime Minister to speak. The Prime Minister.'

The Prime Minister stepped forward, her chin up, eyes revolutionary, lips pursed. She unpursed them to speak.

'Friends and comrades,' said she, 'a great Revolution has shaken the earth, literally so, with bulldozers and things of the kind. Inspired by the infallible ideology of the Revolution, we have reaped a bumper crop.'

'What's the ideology of the Revolution, madam?' asked one of the sundry invitees.

'That is being defined,' said the Prime Minister. 'It is constantly changing, even as the weather changes, and you know how it is with the weather. Well,' she continued, 'in three years time we will be self-sufficient, and in another three, we will be exporting to a world impoverished by a nuclear war.'

'But there mayn't be a nuclear war,' said a war strategist who was present. 'All those who

matter have signed the Non-proliferation treaty.'

'We haven't,' said a Kitchen Cabinet boy curtly, whereupon the war strategist appeared crestfallen, and went on into a convulsion of self-criticism.

'Well,' said the Prime Minister, 'we are banking on this nuclear war. We have a great role to play as peace maker.'

'But, madam,' persisted one of the sundries again, 'there is a contradiction in what you say.'

'All contradictions will be resolved,' said the Food and Agriculture Minister, 'by the Glorious Socialist Wheat Revolution.'

'Objection,' shouted one of the planners.

'Certainly,' said the Prime Minister, 'we shall encourage every voice of healthy dissent. Speak up.'

'You said,' said the Planner, 'that we will be in a position to export wheat.'

'I did indeed,' said the Prime Minister, 'though it doesn't mean we will stop PL 480 imports. This is a shrinking world, and we can't afford to be isolationist.'

'But,' said the Food and Agriculture Minister, 'the Revolution is not for export.'

'But this is a wheat revolution,' pleaded Charvaka.

'No revolution is for export,' ruled the Food and Agriculture Minister. 'You are free, however, to export plain wheat.'

'Fair enough,' said Charvaka.

'Certainly not,' said the former Minister for Petroleum and Chemicals. 'The Revolution will have to be exported, if necessary against the wishes of the Establishment, which is trying to perpetuate the status-quo. That's why I resigned, and decided to take the Revolution places.'

'And he has taken a lot of fertiliser with him,' said another of the sundries.

'Have you, Asoka?' asked the Prime Minister in great concern.

'Why else did I take up the

Petroleum and Chemicals portfolio?' said the former Minister. 'Fertiliser, which was part of Chemical, was the major attraction for a revolutionary like me. I am taking a quantity of fertiliser with me, and taking all the precious knowhow of fertiliser decontrol, too. I am going out as a guerilla of the Wheat Revolution.'

The Prime Minister was agitated. 'But, Asoka,' said she, 'you never told me. This is irregular.'

'Of course it's irregular,' said the former Minister. 'All guerilla war is irregular war, if you are tied down to hackneyed notions of war, to the merely sterile and 'pro' in war. I'm a guerilla, I'm Terribly Earnest Asoka 'Che' Guevara, and you can soon get the photostatic copies of my diaries, starting from my dreary days in the PSP to the even more dreary days in the Planning Commission, followed by the brief interlude of hope and joy as Minister for Striking Oil, and then when my inner voice began calling me out into the political wilderness to carry on the Revolution.'

'You'd put out your diaries, Che?' asked Charvaka, with pride and affection.

'I will.'

'But you said you were resigning over Czechoslovakia,' said the Prime Minister.

'That's what I had thought too,' said the former Minister, and broke down. He began to sob, like all guerillas do in times of excessive revolutionary strain.

There was a hush. And Charvaka said, 'Comrades of the Glorious Socialist Wheat Revolution, we should compose our differences on this auspicious occasion. The revolutionary vanguard can't be allowed to split. There is the perennial threat of a wheat counter-revolution. I now call on the Prime Minister to tell us all about the Wheat Revolution.'

The Prime Minister flushed red. Her lips were pursed. 'The Glorious Socialist Wheat Revolution,' said she, 'is a silent revolution.'

And she sat down, and wouldn't speak.

—Charvaka

MOZAMBIQUE

FRELIMO Fight Against Heavy Odds

RAMESH JAURA

THE Portuguese "overseas territory", Mozambique, in southern Africa, completes four years of its continued armed struggle for freedom on September 25. The freedom fighters of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) can boast of a semi-liberated area of one-fifth of their country which is eight times the size of Portugal. In these areas, the Mozambicans are able to handle their own affairs for the first time in the last 70 to 100 years.

But Portugal's attitude to Mozambique has not changed, as FRELIMO told the UN Special Committee of 24 on Colonialism last year. Salazar and his cohorts have in fact increased military commitment in Mozambique: half of the 40 per cent Portuguese budget is utilised to finance the army in three colonies in Africa. Portugal also persists in practicing brutal methods to prevent the Mozambicans to join the ranks of FRELIMO freedom fighters.

According to a recent "Portuguese and Colonial Bulletin", the Salazar government has extended compulsory military training from three to four years. Age for call-up is now 18. Men between 18-22 are not allowed to emigrate or leave the country until they have completed the period of military service. Till the age of 45 men are subjected to periodical medical inspection to choose the fittest. Those unfit for service are enlisted in some capacity suited to their capabilities,

under the supervision of fascist "Portuguese legion".

These measures have been necessitated by a number of factors. Opposition to colonial war has been mounting of late in Portugal which despite being the poorest country in Europe has to spend millions of pounds. Portugal has to fight in a wide frontline—not only in Mozambique but also in Angola and Guinea. But the soldiers they have are not enough to cover the entire battlefield. Besides, Mozambican soldiers in Portuguese army have been deserting the ranks to join the FRELIMO freedom fighters.

But to keep its stronghold in Africa, Portugal draws strength and encouragement from the continued support of some major Western powers who dare defy the UN resolutions. These powers, according to FRELIMO petition to the UN Committee of 24, maintain extensive commercial relations with Portugal, "and in some cases have increased their economic activities in her subjugated territories". FRELIMO President Dr Eduardo Mondlane regretted that his previous petitions to the Committee had achieved "little more than empty resolutions". During an earlier petition to the Committee in May 1966, Dr Mondlane stated: "Under the guise of participating in an alliance for the defence of democracy the UK, Ireland, USA, France, Federal Republic of Germany and a few other

powers are supplying Portugal with some of the most deadly modern weapons and training her soldiers in the techniques of counter-guerrilla warfare".

Besides the five countries enlisted by Dr Mondlane, Sweden and Switzerland—among the seven EFTA countries—also have trade relations with Portugal even though such ties are prohibited by the UN resolutions which have characterised Salazar's deeds as "crimes against humanity". Although "Portuguese Africa" is not included in the EFTA area, it is not surprising that the foreign investment in Portugal has overflowed to her colonies. In fact, British firms have long been established in these colonies. The Sena Sugar Corporation of Mozambique accounts for 70 per cent of total sugar production in Mozambique.

Even France which has withdrawn from the NATO forces and is deemed to be the "champion of Third World" uses the port of Lourenco-Marques to supply oil to the illegal regime of Ian Smith. Refinery is owned by the Portuguese SONAP Company through its subsidiary SONAREP, in which the French Campagne Francaise de Petroles holds minority share of 27 per cent. The French government owns 37 per cent of CFP, and the subsidiary has the exclusive contract for supply of crude oil to the refinery with an annual capacity of 800,000 tons. The oil is supplied to Mozambique

whose needs are very small, and also Johannesburg area of South Africa. Rhodesia's share comes to about 200,000 tons a year, which is half its annual requirement.

Ineffective Sanctions

This explains partly the ineffectiveness of sanctions against Rhodesia. It also focusses on the Portugal-Rhodesia alliance which is obviously directed against the liberation movements in the entire southern region of the African continent. This alliance includes export of Mozambican labour to Rhodesia. According to UN statistics, in 1963, 119,871 Mozambicans went to work in Rhodesia—6,387 of these to the mines. While the Portuguese gain taxes remitted by the migrant workers, Rhodesia gets an extra source of labour.

Tourism is another aspect of this alliance: the nearest stretch of coastline to Rhodesia is in Mozambique and every year about 80,000 White Rhodesians go to Mozambican resorts for holidaying.

Despite the heavy odds arising out of the support for Portugal, the Mozambicans are obviously determined to wrest freedom. To quote Dr Mondlane: "As the revolution grows, political consciousness of our militants reaches greater height and the understanding of problems becomes clearer and more correct". It was a measure of the indomitable spirit of Mozambican guerrillas that FRELIMO president announced at a press conference towards end of March that freedom fighters had reopened war zone in the Portuguese territory along the Zambesi river in Tete Province—the second Portuguese defence line. The first line of defence had, already been broken through and FRELIMO forces were operating in the far south of Niassa, Mozambique's north-western province. The struggle in Tete had been going on in 1964 and 1965 but due to difficulties, Dr Mondlane said, the front had to be closed temporarily concentrating all action in the provinces of Cabo Delgado and Niassa.

Tanzania and have been largely liberated. In these provinces, agricultural cooperatives have been formed, some land redistributed and certain essential farm implements imported. Despite frequent raids by the Portuguese, people in Cabo Delgado province have cultivated more land than ever before and are able to grow crops of real use to them instead of cash crops which earned rich profits for the Portuguese. FRELIMO has started a number of retail price shops and are arranging for import of essentials and export of surplus agricultural produce.

Role of Women

Besides, a number of health centres have been established in Mozambique and medical staff at its centres in Tanzania are being trained. Education is being given considerable importance. By 1967, 10,000 children in Mozambique were receiving primary education, while in Tanzania the Mozambique Institute was providing secondary education for over 100 children. The Institute is headed by FRELIMO President's wife Janet Mondlane.

Mrs Mondlane is not the only woman taking part in the freedom struggle. Large numbers of other women have joined the League of Mozambican Women which has been assigned the following role by Dr Mondlane who addressed its First Congress two years ago: (a) The integration of women into actual armed struggles; (b) integration into popular militias and groups which transport the war materials from one area to another, and of foodstuffs and clothing for freedom fighters; and (c) rallying of women into communication system and their active role in administration which is now established in the semi-liberated areas.

The success of the armed struggle during the last four years is, of course, largely due to the political organisation of the FRELIMO under the guidance of Dr Mondlane and his colleagues. But the increased moral and material support from "our

measure responsible for advance towards independence. The liberation movements launched by ANC-ZAPU alliance in South Africa and Rhodesia, SWAPO in South-West Africa, PAIGC in Guinea and MPLA in Angola, have also contributed towards creating conditions for breaking the unholy alliance in southern Africa.

Besides, the OAU Liberation Committee has been increasing its involvement in the liberation struggle in southern Africa. Last year, on the Mozambique Liberation Day, Dr Mondlane spoke of the vital support from the neighbouring Tanzania and Zambia. "Tanzania has never had any problems as to the role she should play in the liberation of Africa, for in spite of her material difficulties, she has always known how to interpret her policies in a manner that has favoured and supported the struggle".

Zambia's Support

Referring to Zambia's contribution FRELIMO president said: "Zambia has for some time had to take into consideration a number of material problems which made it difficult for her to translate into practical terms her determination for supporting the liberation struggle". Since her independence about four years ago she had been working hard to find solutions to her geographic situation while at the same time doing everything possible to support the struggle. Algeria, UAR and Tunisia, despite physical distance which separates them from Mozambique, have "no difficulty in feeling the urge in more than one way, for aiding the struggle of the people of Mozambique".

While the armed struggle goes on, the FRELIMO is convinced more than ever before, that Mozambique shall be free. For, as an African lyric says in praise of force:

*They disturbed you my bull
In your sleep
You rose mysteriously like a
legendary animal
And tore them apart from
head to toe.*

Convincing Though Lop-sided

THE EMERGENCE OF INDIAN NATIONALISM. *Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century* by ANIL SEAL (Cambridge, 1968, pp. xvi+416. Price : 70 shillings)

THIS is the first of a series of five volumes intended to study political changes in South Asia from the 1870s to the 1940s. Interesting, serious and provoking, the book fails in one respect: it does not describe the emergence of nationalism.

It deals with the nature of the British Indian government, the policies of the rulers during the 1870s and the 1880s, the social structure in the three presidencies and the changes introduced in it by English education. This is done to explain the working of collaboration and competition in the later nineteenth century which provides the basic theme. The rest that follows is an illustration of this theme. This rest consists of political associations in the presidencies, with special emphasis on Bengal and Bombay; the search for an organ to present a united front which materialised in the Indian National Congress; and the Muslim breakaway which paved the way for a separate Muslim nationalism in India.

Yet one is kept guessing as to how and where nationalism emerged. Seal says that the political associations of presidencies ushered in the era of modern politics in India. He then defines nationalism as a process by which different parts of India were drawn into politics for different reasons and at different times. He explains it in terms of uneven educa-

tional development and political sophistication in the country.

But where is nationalism? How did it start? This is of crucial importance for the subject studied by Seal and he cannot dismiss it by saying, as he does say, that tracing the genesis of Indian nationalism would take a scholar to the first years of the last century. If he really thinks so, he should go back as far as the idea of nationalism takes him. In any case he cannot take its emergence for granted.

What is more significant, Seal's definition of nationalism confuses between cause and effect. It puts the cart before the horse. Nationalism was *not the process* by which Indians—of which parts and when, is not relevant to a definition—took part in politics; rather, they interested themselves with political activity as a result of a vague urge which eventually became full-blooded nationalism. This urge was the product of different factors. As it became less vague it gained in strength and invigorated the political activity that had resulted from it. In concrete terms, the Indian National Congress—an important stage in this process of political development—was not Indian nationalism but only one of its manifestations. By ignoring the factors that led to the birth of Indian nationalism and confining himself to the process of its expression in the political

field alone, Seal has made his work extremely lop-sided.

In the exposition of his theme, however, Seal is confident and for the most part convincing. He relates political changes to uneven development of regions and of sections within these regions. This naturally fostered competition, which the British rule aggravated, and influenced not only the growth but also the character of nationalism.

The Congress, for example, owed many weaknesses in its organisation and finance as well as its inability to forge and put forward commonly agreed demands to this unevenness and competition. Even its moderation, as Seal points out, resulted from this to a considerable extent. But it was in the period to be dealt within subsequent volumes that these twin factors came into vigorous play. It seems from Seal's survey of the whole period, in the last chapter of this volume, that he will be able to present a connected account of the continuous growth of the divisive forces which are plaguing our national organism today. This historical perspective is badly needed today and Seal will deserve our gratitude if he provides it.

Possibly the most notable contribution of Seal is his narration of the process by which Muslims took to politics. We seemed, till some time back, to think that we had understood the problem of Muslim politics

by employing the formula of divide and rule on the 'communal triangle'. Doubts, however, have emerged to disturb some minds. Such disturbed minds will welcome Seal's approach to this question, uninhibited by prejudice as it is.

But in another regard Seal needs to be frankly criticised. It is of the essence of scholarship to perceive the limitations of one's knowledge and mind. Seal has read a good deal and he writes with perception and a flair for effect. This is most satisfying. But he also attempts to make definite assertions about matters which, in view of his lack of study, he should have let alone. He does not seem to

have seriously studied the period before Lytton's arrival in India. Yet he has the confidence to assert that all the seven Indians who qualified for the covenanted civil service during 1871 and 1876 were barristers. Apart from the apparent incredibility of such a statement, it is contradicted by the well-known case of Surendranath Banerji. After a self-consuming year or toil in the midst of mental agony and pecuniary hardships, Banerji was told that he could not qualify for the Bar at the Middle Temple because of his dismissal from the I.C.S. More demaging is the suggestion whether a man who writes this can really understand the grievance—so im-

portant in the emergence of Indian nationalism—of Indians about the maximum age for the I.C.S. examination. They had argued that it was too low for an Indian to complete his education in India and leave for England with a fair chance of success at the London competition. Here is a historian of Indian nationalism asserting that the age limit gave Indians sufficient time to qualify for the Bar and then compete for the I.C.S. But it is no use adding to such unimportant misstatements in the book.

Seal's work suggests one final comment: it is impossible to know without seeing the whole.

P. K. Nayar

CZECHOSLOVAK CRISIS (Continued from Page 16)

West German Government admits there were 8,000. There were three to four thousand Americans in Czechoslovakia, besides the large numbers of Italian, French and British. Of course, most of these were students on vacation; of course there were businessmen amongst them. But one would have to be totally blind not to see that there was a world-wide mobilisation of the ideological and political cadre of imperialism in Czechoslovakia.

Every CIA operator in the USA and especially those with a liberal or socialist coloration had left for Prague during those weeks. The lead story in *People's World* picked up from a San Jose paper, says that the State Chairman of the Young Americans for Freedom in California declared that he had just returned from Czechoslovakia "organising students against communism." In fact, I believe, there was a larger anti-Socialist force in Czechoslovakia than there was a few weeks before the open counter-revolution in Hungary in 1956. The situation was heading for a confrontation.

The Bratislava agreement could have been helpful. But the leadership did not fight for it. Instead of fighting for the agreement, the Czechoslovakian leaders went on TV and lifted their fingers in a V-for-Victory sign. This created more confusion. The leadership lost the support of honest people because of this. Thus they were even less able to fight, the anti-socialist forces. The reason the whole Czechoslovak Presidium met with the Soviet Politburo at Cierna was that members had lost confidence in the officers (office-bearers).

For example, some of the officers had received the invitation to the Warsaw meeting by letter personally and by phone. They never told the other members of the Presidium, and later, in the name of the Presidium, told the world in the answer to the

letter of the five Parties that they received the invitation too late. This loss of confidence in each other only added to the confusion, to the paralysis of the leadership.

III

THE facts about the anti-socialist elements preparing for the armed phase have come mainly from Czechoslovakian Communists. When this was taken up with the leaders they promised immediate action. They would turn the matter over to the Minister of the Interior, General Pavel. He would report, "Not true".

Now the facts are coming out. Arms have been found in the basements of 11 Ministries—illegal and in most cases not known by the Ministries. Heavy machine guns, hand grenades, anti-tank guns: they have been found in Bratislava, Ostrava, Brno, Karlovy Vary and Prague. Tens of thousands of automatic weapons have already been discovered. They are of the West German and US make. The basement of the Press Club was stacked with weapons. Powerful mobile radio broadcasting stations, made in West Germany and never bought by the Czech Government, have turned up. Someone called away border guards so the radio stations could be brought in.

Cherne and Volman

There were secret printing shops—all set up.

The center of the radio broadcasting operations of counter-revolutionary institutions in Czechoslovakia was in the West German Army building in Munich.

They set up full scale gallows in town squares—for practice, they hung Communist leaders in effigy.

Delegates to the coming Congress were being appointed, not elected, in many areas. The so-called underground Congress was not called by the Central Committee nor by the leadership. No Slovak representatives were present. The representatives of the armed services were not present. It was a rump congress.

Amongst the counter-revolutionary cadre that marched to Prague was Leo Cherne, a professional anti-socialist organiser of the International Rescue Committee, believed to be a CIA agency connected with Radio Free Europe. He drove into Prague from Vienna.

Sacha Volman heads the Agrarian Institute in the Dominican Republic and was with the International Rescue Committee in 1955. He is a Romanian emigre. He was the first from the United States to arrive in Budapest during the 1956 events. He drove from Vienna to Budapest at that time, was Director of the Institute of International Labour Research of which Norman Thomas was President. This was a CIA-funded agency. Volman organised trips to the Dominican Republic in 1966 to give approval to their elections. Volman was on the scene in Czechoslovakia.

It now appears that some of the anti-socialist activities were directed and initiated from within the leadership itself. All old Communists were systematically eliminated from the security forces.

The forces across the border were set. A special force—in the hundreds—especially trained Czechoslovak refugees, trained in demolition and sniping, and special group leaders had already crossed the borders from West Germany.

They started to arrest Communist leaders.

Should we be surprised that US and West German imperialists are so active—that they so carefully learned the lesson of 1956?

We should know better.

Hitler's General Staff chief in charge of intelligence for Eastern Europe was General Gehlen who was picked up by the CIA after World War II. He heads the CIA's East European operations for West Germany and the USA as he had done for Hitler. His school for counter-revolution in West Germany graduates thousands of operators each year specially trained for operation in Eastern Europe.

Imperialism has never recognised the World War II settlement of the Sudeten area, the Polish area, Eastern Europe etc. The "building of bridges" by US imperialism was in fact the building of underground ideological tunnels. It was a part of the softening up process.

It is clear the situation was headed for an explosion.

For seven months there were conferences, meetings, discussions between the parties of the socialist countries and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. There was Bratislava and Cierna. The five socialist countries asked Czechoslovakia to control its borders with West Germany and to take up the fight against the anti-socialist forces.

I think both the time and the alternatives ran out.

Once the open struggle would have started, the sacrifices would have been much greater.

As it was, Soviet soldiers were killed, but the report is that not one Five-Power military forces soldier shot even one bullet at any person in Czechoslovakia.

How to explain the fact that the leadership failed to act against the anti-socialist forces in spite of their own admission that a danger was growing and in spite of their continued promises to do so? These are very important questions. There may be many reasons for this failure, including the growing influence of the rightwing in the leadership and the overall tendency to play down the right danger and even to collaborate with it. This is the outbreak of a factional struggle in the leadership. This has happened in many parties, including Hungary.

Weakness of One-sidedness

We should not be surprised because that happened in our party during the struggle against the right influence which resulted in the loss of our Party. But the main ideological and political reasons, it seems to me, have been the argument of the leadership that action against the anti-socialist and Right-wing forces would weaken the fight for democratization. They insisted that the Right could be weakened only by measures to correct the past.

In a general sense that is true; in the struggle to carry out a democratization programme the prestige of the party grows. In that sense it was a correct line. The weakness in that position, however, has been that it was one-sided and it failed to see the class struggle.

The Right-wing social forces were not working to democratize the country, but in the name of democracy and liberalism, they were working to eliminate the Marxist forces in the country and to organise the anti-socialist forces. Therefore, the fight to promote democracy and socialism demanded simultaneous struggle against the anti-socialist forces. The capitalist elements were not yet eliminated. They have been present in the trade organisations, in schools, in mass communications and in the Government. Hence the fact that they forgot the class struggle, and most important, the fact that they forgot the lessons of Hungary, explain the creeping paralysis of leadership.

There were people in our Party in 1956 who opposed the action of the Soviet Union in using armed force to save the Hungarian revolution, but some now say that presuming it was necessary in 1956, that does not mean it is justified today. They say that in 1956 in Hungary, the counter-revolution revealed itself openly and everybody could see that it was necessary.

Even this argument does not hold water because there were many people, including Communists, in 1956 who were so affected by the uproar of the capitalist press that they forgot the supreme demand of saving Socialism, who were so befuddled by the propaganda that they resolutely opposed the

action of the Soviet Union and stood by their position even many months later.

Some leading comrades very honestly admitted their error was that they forgot strategy and historic concepts in the name of tactics. I think this statement is of the utmost importance in the struggle against opportunistic leanings today.

It has been said that the danger does not exist now as it did in 1956 because then we had the cold war, we had the Dulles' policy of containing Communism, etc.

I think such an assessment of the present moment is wrong. It is true at this moment that neither US nor West German imperialism is ready to strike militarily. But, does the danger end there? And even this can change in a matter of days.

The announcement of the end of the "containment" policy did not end US imperialism's aggressive policies.

When momentarily, imperialism does not feel it is ready for a military confrontation in some area, it does not end the danger of imperialism. In fact, that is exactly when it places a greater emphasis on the softening-up process. In such areas it multiplies its efforts in subversion, in infiltration.

Let us not have illusions. US and West German imperialism have trained personnel on the spot ready to move—openly or secretly—whenever the softening-up process reaches the point when there is enough confusion to move. There are such forces ready and in action for every socialist country in the world. It is clear Czechoslovakia was high on the list of West German and US imperialism.

Some comrades keep saying—how come after 20 years of socialism such a danger can emerge?

One of the reasons is that these hostile elements live that long.

When we establish a socialist power in the USA, I am sure we will have tens of millions, totally disgruntled individuals and their families. No matter what socialism will do they will remain disgruntled. You are not going to change the dispossessed rich, the Birchers, the Kluxers and the rest of the bigots. Like Dostoevsky's mouse, they will brood and fester. They will influence some of the youth. After 20 years of socialism, most of them will still be around, brooding and festering.

Why after 20 years? Because after 20 years there is still filtration, subversion and softening-up.

Why after 20 years? Because in 20 years you do not make a new society; you cannot yet have abundance and you cannot yet make the new socialist man.

Why after 20 years? Because the new society has not yet been perfected. In the process of building the new society there is an element of trial and error; there is the human weakness.

Why after 20 years? Because it takes time to undo the deep damage to human character left by capitalism. It takes time to straighten out the mess left by hundreds of years of exploitive systems.

The question is placed incorrectly. The real question is—how has it been possible to do all socialism has done in a brief 20 years?

It is in this context that one must weigh the mistakes and weaknesses of the leadership.

If the leadership had not committed errors, they would have done better. We make no apologies for the errors, but we examine them in a different context than do the enemies of socialism.

(To be Continued Next Week)

REGRETS

IN the issue of May 4, 1968, *Mainstream* carried a story on the working of the Fertilisers and Chemicals Travancore Ltd., Alwaye, under the heading "The Snake in the Fertilizer", in which it was stated:

1) Sri M. K. K. Nair, Managing Director is also the Chairman of the Kala Mandalam and was the principal host, a couple of years ago, to an all-India Conference of writers, for which the premises of the company was given at nominal rent.

2) A snake worship ritual was performed within the premises of the factory to bring good fortune to the Company.

3) The Company had put up temple-shaped pavilions at the exhibitions arranged in Delhi for

UNCTAD, and the Industrial Exhibition in Madras, at considerable cost.

4) The FACT plants are not producing to rated capacity.

5) A Kathakali performance was organised in Delhi, on behalf of FACT in connection with UNCTAD.

6) Colossal amounts seem to have been spent on advertising.

7) The concern has been running at a considerable loss for long years. Year before last the loss was over Rs. 60 lakhs. The books have suddenly registered a profit without a corresponding increase in production.

8) The FACT maintains guest houses in a number of cities including New Delhi.

9) Sri Nair ordered a cricket

stadium to be built in Alwaye, in order that a cricket team, which he wanted to invite, could play there.

10) Recently when the Kala Mandalam Kathakali troupe was touring Europe, Sri Nair also was there obviously on business. But it indeed was a dramatic coincidence.

11) All these make up Sri Nair's little expense-account renaissance court, watched over by the glittering serpent gods.

The Company and Sri Nair have questioned the correctness of the statements indicated in paras 1, 2, 7, 9, 10 and 11.

The Editor expresses his sincere regrets for these errors and makes amends by publishing this correction.

support from different parties in Parliament, voiced frequently and vigorously, did not have any impact on the Government. During the first forty days of the strike Parliament was in session; it is clear that the employers decided that any settlement while Parliament was sitting would be to their disadvantage. They decided to play a waiting game.

The question now arises: how is it that the availability of such widespread support among political parties, including sections of the Congress and the Jana Sangh, was not utilised to mount an effective campaign in support of the striking employees? Here the inadequacy of the leadership of the employees must be squarely blamed. Sectarian tendencies were visible in the leadership; there was a tendency to keep away from different sections of public opinion which were pronouncedly sympathetic to the strikers. The President and the Secretary-General of the AINEF have come out with their differences in public after the strike; but the workers were aware of the rumblings throughout. It is a tribute to their solidarity and determination that the workers did not allow their leaders' quarrels to dishearten them.

It is not clear why the leadership of the AINEF rushed to seek Sri Hathi's intervention immediately after the strike began. It was a totally successful strike, and there was no reason for panicky moves. The appeal to Sri Hathi for intervention was inevitably taken to indicate readiness to compromise even on the minimum rates of wages prescribed in the award. If the question of percentage came into the picture, it is the employees' leaders more than the Labour Minister and the other "mediators" who came into the picture who should be held guilty. The IFWJ was in the picture for part of the time only in a peripheral role. Throughout this period the question of implementation of the journalists' award was hardly ever discussed. Nevertheless the

working journalists' organisation felt committed, rightly, to stand by the non-journalist colleagues.

Once "negotiations" on percentage began, it was inevitable that several red herrings should be drawn across the trail. However, a fair settlement would not have been impossible if two factors had been present: one, complete clarity among the workers' leaders about the objective; and two, restraint on the part of the Labour Minister. Opinion in the ranks of the leadership is said to have varied from insistence on cent per cent implementation to acceptance of 85 per cent in full and final settlement. Advocates of the former line rightly said that there could not be compromise on the minimum; those of the latter thought, not without some justification, that a settlement at 85 per cent would enable the workers to reopen the whole question of wages after a year or two.

So far as the Minister is concerned, he did a distinct disservice to labour by informing the employers that if no settlement was forthcoming he would ask them to pay 75 per cent and refer the whole "dispute" to adjudication. This happened at an early stage of the strike; it is not surprising that the employers collectively decided to sit back and wait for the notification for adjudication. They had already agreed to pay 70 per cent, and all that they would have to pay in such an event was five per cent more. Even this could be easily nullified by tampering with the categorisation of employees prescribed in the award and making each such case a "dispute". Adjudication was entirely to their satisfaction, for it meant prolonged litigation. They were not willing to accept arbitration which could have ensured a proper settlement within three to six months. Adjudication is a process that can last several years.

Another aspect that has come out is the inadequacy of coordination in the employees' organisations. The decision-making forums appear to have been completely ignored or bypassed. The

Secretary-General of the AINEF has publicly admitted that the Joint Council of Action did not meet even once during the strike period. Nor did the working committees of the AINEF and the IFWJ meet during this period! There have been complaints that active workers and several office-bearers were not taken into confidence about the progress of the talks and the various proposals that came up at different times. There have also been complaints that the strike programme was not collectively and fruitfully chalked out. A successful and powerful strike was allowed to wither.

All this is unfortunate. The solution however does not lie in mutual mudslinging in public but in honest self-criticism which alone can lead to a tightening up of the employees' organisations from the top downwards and effective democratic functioning. The workers have shown that they have mettle and will not be cowed; it is for the leaders as a whole to show that they deserve to be the guides of the movement. Decisions in this regard should not be taken in haste or out of pique or on the basis of political considerations depending on the leanings of different groups. Membership of both journalist and non-journalist organisations is made up of persons with differing political sympathies or no political sympathies at all. What binds them together is the awareness of the need for solidarity in the face of unity and obduracy among the employers. This unity of the employees has to be strengthened, not frittered away. This is the biggest lesson of the recent strike.

If this lesson is learnt in the right spirit, the setback suffered now will not matter very much. Setbacks are inevitable for any trade union; one battle won or lost does not decide the course of the war. But there has to be awareness that the war is to be a long one and calls for maximum unity, mutual understanding and cohesion in the ranks of the workers, as much at the top as at the lower levels.



When should I have my next child?

Doctors say the first 4 or 5 years of life are the most important for the development of the child. For the health of the mother also, it is desirable that she does not have another child for at least 3 or 4 years.

Consult your nearest Family Planning Centre today for free advice and services.

Many simple, safe and effective methods of birth-control are available today. Now you can have a child by choice, not by chance.

REMEMBER ...



WHEN YOU HAVE TWO THAT WILL DO



davp 68/289

Haryana's Advance

KHURSHID AHMAD

Health Minister, Haryana

It is not generally realised that India, with only 2.4 per cent of the world's land, maintains 1.46 per cent of the world's population. The annual growth here is more than the total population of Australia. There is a child born every 1.5 seconds. It took all the aeons since Creation to reach the 500 million mark a couple of years ago, but it will take only 28 years more to add that many souls to the country's population.

Ever since Independence, the country has endeavoured to accelerate the pace of economic growth through industrial and agricultural development. Progress in these fields has been considerable. But the increase of population has outstripped much of our developmental gains. If we cannot bring down the birth-rate, our standard of living which is already pitifully low will go down further. Our resources are limited and productivity continues to be low. Requirements of food, employment, clothing, housing and schooling cannot be met unless the population is checked.

Haryana State, which came into existence at the fag end of 1956, with a population of nearly 76 lakhs, is backward economically and educationally. The need to slow down its rate of population growth is therefore much greater. If not immediately checked it is sure to

touch the 90 lakh mark by 1971. With this in view, Haryana State has undertaken the task of bringing down its existing birth-rate of 34 per thousand to 25 in the next few years.

While the educated readily respond to the appeal of the 'red-triangle', poorer sections still oppose the campaigns because of their outmoded ideas and beliefs. In spite of all this, our achievements have been encouraging. During 1967-68 over 58,000 loop insertions were made and nearly 17,000 sterilizations performed. Our aim in the current year is to carry out 57,387

sterilizations and 38,258 loop insertions.

Family Planning in the present context is not a fad or an exotic campaign but a matter of life and death for the nation. In this crusade, officials, non-officials and voluntary agencies, the Press and educational institutions have to join hands to achieve a break-through. We propose setting up a special organisation of mass communication for propagating Family Planning as a way of life. An expert committee is also to be set up which will lay down the guidelines.

Achievements and Task Ahead

DIPAK BHATIA

Commissioner for Family Planning

OUR family planning programme has to cater to the needs of 100 million couples in the reproductive age group or 200 million persons—equivalent to the population of the United States.

The complexities of implementing the programme are the dispersal of the target group in the country's 3,000 cities and towns and 5,60,000 villages, inaccessibility of 80 per cent of population to mass media, the

absence of quick and modern transport, low literacy and diverse customs, traditions and languages. It is in the face of these limitations that the organization for implementation of the programme had to be developed.

It is no mean achievement that a programme of such magnitude was conceived and its implementation taken up. An administrative machinery capable of decision-making and quick implementation had to be

developed so as to deal with the people in their own milieu and to motivate them for accepting the services. The organisation had to be broad-based to achieve results and ensure people's participation. It had to involve the people, their representatives and voluntary organisations.

It can be said that the family planning programme has been framed and implemented not by a bureaucratic machinery but by an organisation alive to community needs.

Never before was so big and concerted an education and motivation endeavour launched. In agriculture and industry big campaigns have been known but these were for increasing production. However, our programme concerns the question of changing individual behaviour and attitudes in personal life and this intimate aspect makes it unique.

Because of this monumental effort, people in India talk more freely and without inhibitions about family planning and sex—something they could never do before. Our ancient society is beginning to realise the importance of personal behaviour as it affects social structure and social life.

In so huge a programme of social importance, no risks can be taken. Only methods of undisputed efficacy established by long use and scientific trials could be introduced. The people had to be offered alternatives, such as sterilization, loop, the Nirodh (condom) and the pill. Over 4.3 million sterilization operations and 2.8 million loop insertions have been performed. The pill is being introduced in 312 pilot projects to find out the degree of acceptability.

While providing alternatives, we are not forcing any, and the people have the satisfaction of making a choice according to their needs. With the exception of condom it can be said that if a large majority of our people

accept sterilization, IUCD or the pill, the overall result would be gratifying and of a higher order than the use of only a single effective method.

We seek to achieve the target of a reduced birth-rate by 1976-77. We cannot ignore the time factor because indifference to this variable can do irreparable damage to our economy and to our programmes for progress. We have to achieve the target within a given period in a given segment of the population.

The logistics of such a programme have to be planned carefully. A break in the supply line or delay in provision of services is likely to do great damage and shake public confidence. We have to ensure mobility of our teams, a live and active supply line so that the people get what they want in time. We employ public relations and marketing techniques which only big business houses and industrial undertakings did heretofore. We are breaking new ground and creating new precedents in medical and public health work.

The limitations of the programme have been mainly in the fields of training, research and evaluation. Needing a corps of 1,25,000 trained personnel one could not wait for the training programme to be completed. Both had to proceed simultaneously. Our progress in the training field has been slow mainly because of the time needed to build up training institutions and have personnel to man them. Now we have 46 centres for training.

In the field of research the findings from 21 centres are flowing in. We have to feed these findings into the programme proper to keep up its efficiency and to identify new problems.

The weak link has been evaluation—of the organisation, techniques and methods and field operations. In addition, a system of reporting and record keeping has to be evolved to

provide an indication of work done at given points in time.

As a result of the implementation of the programme, two million births have been prevented and if progress at the existing rate continues, by 1976-77 we would be able to prevent about 12.5 million births annually to offset the present annual addition of 13 million. That would be the stage when we can claim to have controlled our population growth and embarked on an era of all-round progress.

The primary task we have to accomplish is that of consolidation of the progress made. We have also to strengthen the training and evaluation components of the programme and streamline the machinery for the collection of statistics. We have to keep a watch on fluctuations in the population. Though the target date is 1976-77, with a better trained corps of workers, experience gained and streamlining of administration, we can accelerate the pace and achieve a reduction in the birth rate sooner than planned.

We are doing our best. But this best is not sufficient. We have to double and redouble our efforts. Targets laid down have to be achieved within time. There can be no excuse for failure because there is no paucity of funds or of man-power or materials.

In addition, we have an intensive educational and motivational drive. This process should become a self-generating one. It is only when education becomes a self-generating force that we can say that the climate for the acceptance and practice of the small family norm has been created. The efficiency of our programme and the degree of participation and involvement of the community are the best guarantees.

I believe that given the resources, the progress already made and the plans now afoot we could certainly solve the population problem.

Spacing New Arrivals

POPULATION explosion is a world-wide phenomenon, but it is more perceptible in the case of developing countries. India, for instance, had a population of 36 crores in 1951 but by 1966, in 15 years, it reached the 50-crore mark. Today the population is estimated at 53 crores and is likely to grow to 100 crores by 2000 A.D. In other words, in about 50 years, the population will have almost tripled itself.

To contain this fantastic increase in number—an increase which is eating away all developmental gains made over the years—the Government of India has set itself to the task of bringing down the birth rate through all known scientific family planning measures.

It is estimated that if all married people in India decide to have 3 children and no more, the birth rate will come down from the existing 41 to 25 per 1000 of population. This is based on the simple calculation that the first order births out of these 41 are 9; the second and the third order births are 8 each and fourth order and above are 16. Thus, if all couples had only one child, the birth rate would be 9, if they had 2, it would be 17; and if they had three, it would be 25.

India's family planning pro-

gramme aims to bring down the birth rate to 25 by 1975-76 and to 23 by 1978. This objective can be achieved only if the people practise family planning.

It is estimated that if girls marry after the age of 20 years and boys after 25, the birth rate will come down by 15 per cent in the next 10 years. The advantage will be that boys and girls will be able to complete education and will be physically and psychologically better equipped to share the responsibility of parenthood. This mental and physical maturity coupled with education can itself result in small families. Studies have shown that educated women have smaller families.

The demographic problem of reducing the birth rate is, however, not solved by just having three children and no more. It must also be ensured that there is proper age difference between children so that the mother gets enough time to recoup her health and the child gets the love, affection and nutrition necessary for development. Nutrition experts are of the view that if a child does not get adequate nourishment during the first few years, its mental and physical growth may be retarded.

Studies have shown that gene-

rally people want only three children though they have many more. The reason why they have more than they want is that they do not know that they can have children by choice and not by chance and that facilities for this purpose are available.

For example 'Nirodh' can be used by the newly married husband to delay the arrival of the first baby. Once a baby is born, the mother can avail herself of the loop which helps in spacing and can be taken out easily whenever desired. After two or three children, either the husband or the wife can go in for sterilization—vasectomy for husband or tubectomy for wife. These are simple and safe operations and are provided free of cost.

Family planning services are now available throughout the country and the easiest way to identify them is by the sign of the inverted red triangle. If more and more people come forward to avail themselves of family planning facilities and restrict their family to a maximum of three children with at least 3 years difference between every two, they can really help cut down the country's birth-rate and steer the nation to economic progress.

Twin Districts on Top

OSMANABAD and Bhir districts of Maharashtra are adjacent to each other and the pattern of their social and economic life is very much the same. Both are in the interior, away from the railway line. There are a few oil mills and except one which produces Vanaspati, they are small units. Agriculture is the main source of livelihood and the bulk of the population consists of landless agricultural labour.

The two districts have, however, proved more progressive than most, winning for two consecutive years the first and second positions in family planning work in the State. Last year, they concentrated on the IUCD campaign. Osmanabad had the highest figure for loop insertions and bagged the coveted Karve Award for 1966-67. Bhir was second.

In 1967-68 Maharashtra decided to concentrate on sterilizations. Till February 1968 Osmanabad and Bhir lagged behind districts like Dhulia and Nasik. With only a month to go, it seemed unlikely that the twin districts would be able to retain their position of distinction. But Osmanabad's District Health Officer, Dr K.S. Lohokare, spent the month moving from one primary health centre to another, exhorting his medical officers to put in the little extra effort needed to come on top.

Throughout the crucial month medical officers of both districts devoted themselves to sterilization work with zeal. The medical officers had to walk or cycle

many miles a day to reach remote villages. Often the doctor and his team remained away from home for days, performing vasectomies at places where one would normally find it impossible to raise an operation room.

Bhir had a van to carry the team to villages and this van was converted into an operation cubicle. The staff of each primary health centre got further trained while assisting the doctor during operations.

March over, Osmanabad had not only shattered all previous records of monthly performance but had made up enough to edge out all contenders for the top position. Bhir came up second.

Osmanabad had a population of 17,50,000 and had the sterilization target of 12,250 for 1967-

68. When figures were tabulated, Osmanabad had actually done 19,778 vasectomies and 371 tubectomies. The total sterilization figure of 20,149 gave Osmanabad 164 per cent achievement. On the loop front also, Osmanabad topped with 4,823 insertions or 2.77 insertions per 1000. Figures for Bhir were: total population—11,83,000, target—8,281; achievement—vasectomies—12,784; tubectomies—377; total sterilizations 13,161. Bhir thus reached a percentage of 158.93 and had performed 11.72 sterilizations for every 1000 of population.

The success of Osmanabad and Bhir was no doubt due to the devoted work of the doctors and the enlightened response of the people. It was also due to the well-organised efforts of promoters.

Birth-Rate Declines

IN March 1965 Lippes' loop was first introduced in Hooghly district of West Bengal as a pilot project. The loop was so enthusiastically accepted that the programme was extended throughout the State. Since then, the State has had 2,61,284 loop insertions up to June this year. In sterilization, the State has done even better—3,12,499 operations till the end of June.

The present population of West Bengal is 41 million. The family planning programme has assumed special significance in this State because of the State's high rate of growth of population—2.7 per cent as against the national average of 2.5 per cent in India. But the State's birth-rate has been the same as elsewhere in India: 40 per thousand. The higher rate of popu-

lation growth in West Bengal requires careful statistical analysis and evaluation. The State's death-rate also is 13.4 per thousand as against the Indian average of 14.

The State sustained its progress by vasectomy operations on a large scale. An intensive training programme was carried out for a large number of medical officers at health centres and hospitals and the scheme to compensate for loss of wages to those undergoing operation was effectively put into practice. Many districts and blocks did outstanding work. The rate of sterilization performance of Pu-

rulia, Calcutta and Bankura districts was well over 9 per 1000 persons. Chakooah (Nadia), Baruipore, Sonarpore (both 24 Parganas) and Hemtabad (West Dinajpore) blocks performed 35 to 40 sterilization operations per 1000 in each block.

A declining trend in the birth-rate in Calcutta has been indicated in the surveys conducted by the Indian Statistical Institute. A survey covering about 10,000 persons in the city's predominantly middle-class area, Shyambazar, showed that the birth-rate had declined. A sample survey carried out in 1966 throughout Hooghly district showed the birth

rate to be 41 per 1000 in rural areas and 26 in urban areas.

Loop has been gaining popularity in West Bengal. It has been recognised that the loop, as a reversible, safe and simple device, is bound to feature significantly in the family planning movement. Special steps have been taken for proper selection of suitable loop cases, adequate follow-up and giving the right type of medicines to avoid complications. As a result, loop insertions are going up in a large number of health centres and hospitals. Distribution of condoms on a wide scale has been taken in hand.

Strides in the South

ABOUT one-fourth of India's population lives in the southern region comprising Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Madras, Mysore, Pondicherry, Minicoy and Laccadive Islands. This region during 1966-67 fulfilled the target of sterilization to the extent of 85 per cent. Madras exceeded the target. In Madras State, the number of sterilizations since the inception of the programme up to the end of March 1968 is nearly 7,00,000 and of IUCD placements a little over 12,000.

Density of population in the South differs from State to State. While the density in Kerala is 1,142 persons per square mile, that in Mysore is 312 persons.

The experience of camps at Gannavaram and Jadcherla in Andhra Pradesh, Balaramapuram in Kerala and Bellary in Mysore State, bears testimony to

the people's spontaneous response.

More than 2,000 women, mostly from the working class, accepted tubectomy in a mass camp at Gannavaram near Vijayawada in October-November, 1967. It was a record. This camp was marked by excellent arrangements for transport, food and sanitation.

At the Jadcherla camp in Mahbubnagar District of Andhra Pradesh the target of 1,000 vasectomy operations was exceeded by 560 in a single day in November last year. The two camps were the first of their kind in India. Up to the end of March this year nearly 2,75,000 sterilization operations and nearly 1,05,000 loop insertions were performed in Andhra.

At the Balaramapuram camp near Trivandrum, 330 vasectomy

operations and nearly 100 IUCD insertions were done in a single day, thanks to the excellent co-ordination between the State Government and voluntary agencies. The cumulative total of sterilization operations in Kerala up to March, 1968, is a little over 2 lakhs, while IUCD placements numbered about a lakh.

In Bellary district of Mysore State, the intensive family planning drive in July this year saw the completion of more than 1,000 sterilization operations and a good number of IUCD insertions. During 1967-68, Chitradurga and Hassan districts of Mysore State exceeded 200 per cent of targets in sterilization. Mysore State has taken long strides by performing 231,000 sterilization operations and 204,000 IUCD insertions up to March this year.

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GANDHI JAYANTI SPECIAL



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Jawaharlal Nehru

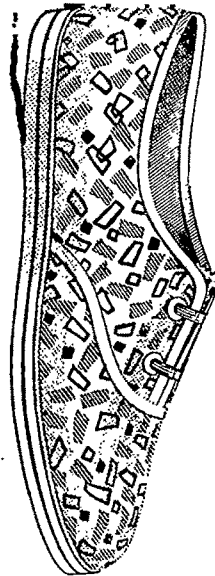
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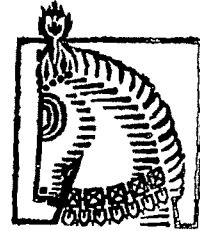
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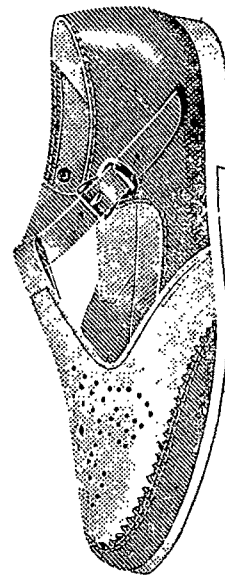


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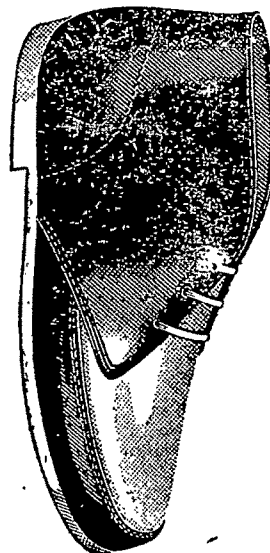
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THE GREAT BETRAYAL

INDRAPRASTHA BHAWAN has become a symbol—and not merely because lathi-happy policemen were let loose on meek, unarmed and law-abiding clerks and officials, including many women. Police excesses have not been unknown in the years of freedom; it is also true that these excesses have largely been directed against working people in both urban and rural areas. The Delhi incidents of September 19, along with those at Pathankot and Bikaner, are significant because they seem to mark a decisive repudiation by our rulers of the legacy of Gandhiji, whose birth centenary they profess to celebrate during the next twelve months beginning from this week.

Not the legacy of non-violence or truth, for neither of these concepts had any real appeal for the Mahatma's khadi-clad followers even while he was in our midst. What has been publicly discarded now is the basic humanity on which Gandhiji assiduously sought to build his dreams of future India. The inhumanity involved in the wanton and unprovoked violence against "loyal" employees was such that those who would not join the token strike refused to enter their offices for four days. By sheer brutality the authorities had successfully turned them into rebels.

But if the ruler's betrayal of Mahatma Gandhi was clear, equally evident was the fact that the most submissive could at times be turned into fierce passive resisters by the use of violence against them. The fact that middle-class employees stood in silent protest in front of their offices for four days provides a ray of hope in the encircling gloom, vindicating the Mahatma.

During the course of the Centenary Year a great deal of lip-service will be offered to the ideals for which Gandhiji stood, not only by the men and women who can claim some kind of association with

him but by many others to whom also the name of Bapu is a convenient veil to cover many misdeeds against the common people whom Gandhiji sought to serve all his life. But all this hypocrisy and humbug cannot hide the stark fact that the millions whose condition Gandhiji wanted improved vastly in the Swaraj of his conception continue to be exploited as before, that the nation's wealth which he wanted distributed equitably among the people of the villages continues to be increasingly concentrated in the hands of a handful of industrialists, businessmen and landlords.

Gandhiji said: "According to me the economic constitution of India.....should be such that no

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one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. In other words, everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet. And this ideal can be universally realized only if the means of production of the elementary necessities of life remain in the control of the masses. These.....should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others'. The condition of the economic structure of India today is thus the most massive piece of evidence of the betrayal of the Mahatma by the very persons who grew up in his shadow and claim to be his disciples. While rejecting the Government employees' demand for need-based minimum wage on the basis of norms accepted over a decade ago, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi pointed to the fact that a huge segment of our population earns only 75 paise per head per day. Some time before his death Dr Ram Manohar Lohia had pointed out that in fact a sizeable section of the country's population lives on less than 25 paise per head per day. The fact is that poverty on this scale persists in this country entirely because of our rulers' subservience to Big Business houses and the rural rich. It does not suit the Congress rulers to analyse in public the extent of increase in the concentration of wealth in a few hands as a direct result of their own failure to take bold measures to prevent it.

Gandhiji's anxiety that socio-economic changes of a radical kind should be brought about by non-violent means, has been conveniently interpreted by his followers, to whom the people trustingly entrusted power, to mean preservation of the status quo and adding to the already acute imbalances. The betrayal of the Mahatma is not a sudden development: it began when the Congress Party, while mouthing socialist slogans played upon caste and communal feelings to secure votes and power; it assumed uglier proportions when in order to enjoy comfortable living and remain in office, Congressmen worked out not-so-secret alliances with vested interests of all kinds and used their power and prestige to confer special favours on these interests.

Under the rule of persons professing to be Gandhians, not only has monopoly capital become more powerful as shown by the meagre reports already available, but black money derived from tax evasion has been increasingly active, distorting the national economy and black-marketing in essential commodities has been increasing at an alarming rate. The legitimate demand for fairer wages has invariably been met with the argument that prices would go up; but there has not been the least effort over the years to control the prices of even essential commodities. Even where half-hearted attempts at control were made, the authorities have resiled at the first opportunity, as in the case of sugar.

The vast difference between the free India that the Mahatma envisaged and the free India in which we live today cannot be better illustrated than by recalling what Gandhiji said about New Delhi several years before 1947: "Take this white elephant which is called New Delhi. Crores have been spent upon it. Suppose that the future Government comes to the conclusion that seeing that we have this white

elephant it ought to be turned to some use.... I contend that these buildings are in conflict with the best interests of the nation. They do not represent the millions of India..... If the National Government comes to the conclusion that the place is unnecessary, no matter what interests are concerned, they will be dispossessed, and they will be dispossessed, I may tell you, without any compensation, because, if you want the Government to pay compensation it will have to rob Peter to pay Paul, and that would be impossible."

But what has really happened after the advent of the National Government in which the Mahatma had such faith? The white elephant has become much more unwieldy than ever before, and the crores that the British spent on building the Capital pale into insignificance compared to the vast sums that free India's Government has spent on its enlargement and embellishment. The contrast between the dreary lives of the rural millions and the air-conditioned comfort of the rulers and agents of Big Business in New Delhi is today more glaring than in the dark days of British Raj.

The rulers of India forgot the most vital lesson taught by Gandhiji, namely, that continuous, living contact with the masses alone can enable them to think and act right. Gandhiji was ever fearful of the consequences of a handful of individuals getting power into their hands in the name of the masses; his fears have proved true. He wielded no power of the kind our rulers possess today, yet he derived a power greater than theirs from the masses. Our rulers are every year getting more and more isolated from the masses; in fact, they are today fearful of the masses and depend on the police and the armed forces as also on the money power of the few to keep themselves in office. Power held and exercised in these circumstances can only corrupt, and it has inevitably corrupted the entire administration. By voluntarily inheriting the bureaucratic structure left by the British without change, and by allowing the bureaucracy to wield more powers, India's rulers have placed the masses at the mercy of a soulless machine whose sole purpose is to keep itself going.

The India Gandhiji wanted cannot be attained unless the whole basis of the socio-economic order is changed drastically. It will remain a dream so long as the people cannot effectively participate in nation-building and share the fruits of national growth. Gandhiji's hope has proved vain chiefly because the present power structure does not permit of dedicated and honest individuals using the State machinery for the furtherance of the interests of the masses.

But the mass awakening which was the Mahatma's biggest contribution to new India continues to grow. If those in power do not respond quickly and convincingly, if drastic steps are not taken to curb the power of the rich, the masses will finally be driven by suffering to try to attain the goal of real economic swaraj by pushing aside those who with impunity use the name of Gandhiji and at the same time strengthen the exploiters in the country. That nemesis will surely overtake them for having betrayed the behests of the man who moved millions to make this country free.

KERALA : HOME MINISTRY'S ALLERGY

THE Union Home Ministry has come to realise that it is fighting a losing battle against the United Front Government of Kerala over the issue of Chief Minister Namboodripad's refusal to empower the local authorities in the State to arrest trade union leaders of the Central staff on the eve of the September 19 token strike.

That is why the spokesman of the Ministry found it necessary last week to say that the discretionary powers of the State Government in this regard were not in question, that the Centre had not discriminated in favour of leaders of political parties in the matter of arrests and that it had in fact arrested Sri S. M. Joshi and Sri Peter Alvares before the strike. The spokesman was also at pains to misrepresent Sri Namboodripad's position and said that the Kerala Chief Minister had refused to implement the Ordinance issued by the President to deal with the token strike of the Central staff. The spokesman further insinuated that Sri Namboodripad had tried to pursue a policy with regard to the Ordinances other than the policy of the Centre; the spokesman said that while implementing a Central law the State Government had no right to pursue a policy other than the one laid down in the law.

Sri Namboodripad had made it clear in his statements to the press that the Kerala Govern-

ment would take, and had taken, all necessary steps to safeguard the Union Government's property and its premises in the State and also to ensure maintenance of law and order during the September 19, strike. All that the Kerala Government had refused to do was to enforce an enabling clause of the Ordinance which empowered the State Government to make preventive arrests. Sri Namboodripad had disclosed that the Union Home Ministry's circular letter to the State Governments had asked them to delegate powers to local authorities to make preventive arrests which Sri Namboodripad was not prepared to do. His argument was simple. The Home Ministry itself had suggested that leaders of political parties should not be taken into preventive custody and that only trade union leaders should be arrested. Sri Namboodripad argued that if the Centre could exercise its discretion in favour of leaders of political parties, he was within his rights to broaden the sphere of discretion and treat trade union leaders at par with the leaders of political parties for purposes of preventive arrests. He made no distinction between the leaders of political parties and trade union leaders because most trade unionists were associated with one or the other political party. The question related only to preventive arrests. The Home Ministry spokesman's

assertion that Sri S. M. Joshi and Sri Alvares were arrested, is not relevant to the discussion. They were arrested for defiance of the law and not with a view to preventing them from "instigating" employees to go on strike. The Kerala Government also made arrests for defiance of the law. The Home Ministry's spokesman referred to the arrest of Sri S. M. Bannerji as well. But Mr Bannerji is not the leader of any political party. In fact he is not even a member of any political party. He has been elected thrice to the Lok Sabha as an Independent candidate and he has joined the Communist group in Parliament only in this term though during his previous terms also he used to sit with the Communist members. Sri Namboodripad had refused to arrest as a preventive measure persons of the category of Sri Bannerji.

Here the question arises: Why was the Centre keen about the preventive arrest of only the trade union leaders of the Central staff and leave out the leaders of political parties? One obvious reason can be that the trade union leaders by and large come from among the Government employees and form the link between the political leaders who are at the head of the Central staff unions and the staff itself; with the trade union leaders in jail the political leaders would not have been in a position to do anything or to provide leadership to the staff. This

would have paralysed the unions and made it easier for the Government to break the strike. But it seems that the Government had much more in mind than merely the breaking up of the token strike. For quite sometime the policy-makers in the Home Ministry have held the view that the time has come to break up the trade union movement as such among the Central staff.

Similarly, at equivalent levels in the Finance Ministry it is felt that the joint consultative machinery which came into being as a result of the 1960 Strike, had become a liability in as much as it had become an instrument of pressure in the hands of the staff. The Finance Ministry therefore wants to do away with it at the earliest opportunity.

It is therefore safe to assume that the undeclared objective of the Home Ministry in insisting on the preventive arrest of the trade union leaders was to utilise the opportunity not merely to make the strike unsuccessful but also to break the trade union movement among the Central employees and to put an end to the joint consultative machinery as an instrument of bargaining by the staff. The draconian measures taken by the Government on the eve of the strike can be explained only in terms of this undeclared objective and not merely as an attempt to prevent a token strike. This is further evident from the fact that the Home Minister himself was not sure whether these measures would demoralise the employees and thus prevent the strike or would provoke them and push

them into making the strike a success. When Sri Namboodripad met Sri Chavan the day the Ordinance was issued he had warned the Home Minister about the provocative effect of the measures which the Centre intended to take.

*

With regard to the second point which the Home Ministry spokesman sought to make—that in the implementation of a Central law a State Government had to pursue the policy laid down in the law and not its own policy—all that the Constitution provides is that “the executive power of every State shall be so exercised as to ensure compliance with laws made by Parliament” (Art. 256) and further that “the executive power of every State shall be so exercised as not to impede or prejudice the exercise of the executive of the Union” (Art. 257); the Centre is empowered to issue directives to every State in this regard. It is for the Centre to deal with its staff in the manner it deems fit; the States come into the picture only in so far as law and order is to be maintained and protection is to be provided to the Central establishments located in the State. On both counts Sri Namboodripad had given categorical assurances, and had taken measures to fulfil the State Government’s constitutional obligation. When the question came up at a late night meeting of the Cabinet’s Internal Affairs Committee on the eve of the strike, the Prime Minister and Sri Jagjivan Ram told the Home

Minister that Sri Namboodripad’s assurances had to be accepted and no action need be taken against the Kerala Government unless it failed to meet its obligations fully. The Attorney General was consulted and he also held the same view. Thus the Home Ministry was stopped from issuing directives to the Kerala Government in terms of Articles 256 and 257 of the Constitution.

There was no question of the Kerala Government pursuing any other policy than the policy laid by the Centre as far as the strike was concerned. But with regard to the maintenance of law and order in the State during strike or at any other time, the Centre has no power under the Constitution to intervene. It is entirely and solely the responsibility of the State and no directive can be issued by the Centre nor any Ordinance promulgated which encroaches upon the State’s rights and its jurisdiction. It is only when law and order *breaks down* and the Governor makes a report to the President in this regard that the Centre can intervene in terms of Article 256 of the Constitution and take over the functions of the State Government. Even if the Home Ministry’s advice had been accepted by the Cabinet’s Internal Affairs Committee and directives issued to the Kerala Government under Articles 256 and 257 and the Kerala Government had refused to comply with these directives, the Centre could do nothing about it unless the Governor had reported breakdown of law and order. There is no provision in

(Continued on Page 36)

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Real Face of Latin America

LAJPAT RAI

FOR most of us Indians Latin America has long been almost a closed book. The dazzling glare of the dollar-lit United States had for many years thrown a curtain around the great continent to the South.

Late in thirties Jawaharlal Nehru lifted the curtain for us to have a glimpse of Latin America. Writing his glimpses of world history he helped us to peep into this vast continent. But it remained just a peep, a mere glimpse, and then the curtain fell again. And interestingly enough, it was to his daughter, Indira Preadarshni, that Nehru addressed himself while lifting the curtain of ignorance about this "vast and sprawling land area"—the continent of Latin America. He described to her the Latin American countries, their history, their culture, the period of conquest by European powers and their struggle for freedom from Spanish and Portuguese yoke. He also described in one of his letters to her the role of American Imperialism in this region, which Smt Gandhi would remember, he called the 'backyard of America', the "Invisible Empire of the United States". This is what Nehru wrote to Indira in his simple and inimitable style that characterized his writings:

"But as they (I mean American capitalists and bankers) grew wealthy they began to look outside for fresh fields of expansion. Their eyes first fell on Latin America. Gradually these bankers controlled through the money they had lent or invested many of the South American governments.....A country may

appear to be free and independent if you consult geography or atlas. But if you look behind the veil you will find that it is in the grip of another country. It is this invisible empire that USA possesses in Latin America. The map does not show it. Through the control of wealth it is easy enough to control the people of that country, and indeed the land itself."

And as in the thirties so today Latin America stays as an invisible empire of the United States, exploited and plundered by the American corporations and used as a pawn in the global strategy of the ruling circles of the Pentagon and the Wall Street. In fact, the key to the understanding of Latin America and its problems lies in understanding the role of American imperialism which holds this continent in thralldom, exploits its vast resources and the labour of its peoples and reduces the freedom of its constituent countries to a mere sham.

Latin America is made up of twenty sovereign states of French, Spanish or Portuguese origin. It also includes a cluster of European and United States colonies and Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, which gained independence from Britain in 1962.

These twenty countries according to ECLA (Economic Commission for Latin America) have an average yearly per capita income of \$ 253—ranging for Venezuela's \$ 800 to Paraguay's \$95 and Haiti's \$ 70. Such figures, however conceal the fact that the vast majority of the people are ground-down in abysmal poverty.

In Peru, a country Smt Gandhi's itinerary, for example, more than half the people live outside the money economy altogether, bartering whatever goods they manage to produce or grow. Of the other half 80 percent earn \$53 a year, while 100 families own 90 percent of the native (as opposed to foreign) wealth or nearly \$1,500,000,000. Of this total, 80 percent is in the hands of just 30 families. Meanwhile, 65 percent of the population is illiterate and 45 percent has never seen a doctor. According to an ECLA report, half of the 1.3 million inhabitants of Lima, one of the most beautiful cities in the world, live in rat-infested slum. One called El Montin is built around, over and in the city dump "where naked children compete with pigs for few bits of food scraps accidentally discarded by garbage men".

In Chile, another country Smt Gandhi would be visiting one third of the 2,000,000 people that live in Santiago, the capital, are crowded in squatter's huts made of earth or stray planks with no water, no electricity, no municipal garbage disposal system, no transport system and no medical attention.

Such conditions prevail in all the Latin American countries, Cuba excepted. Millions of people barely subsist while a few oligarchic families roll in wealth and luxury which might be the envy of the richest and the greatest in any part of the world.

Like India, Latin American countries face the problem of population explosion. Together Latin America's 20 nations have

already more than 280,000,000 people. In 1900 their population was barely 62 million. By 1970 it will be 320,000,000. Latin America's yearly rate of population growth was normal at the beginning of the century (1.8 percent). Today it is 2.6 percent higher than anywhere else in the world including India.

The percentage of children in Latin America is higher than in any other part of the world—despite a frightening 20 to 35 percent infant mortality. Thirty-five percent of all Latin Americans are one to nine years old—figures for USA are 22 percent, India 30 percent. Over 68 percent of all Latin Americans are illiterate with Haiti in the lead where 90 percent of the people can neither read nor write. Peru 65 percent illiterate while figures for Bolivia, Brazil and Colombia are 70, 64 and 68 percent respectively.

Archaic System

One important factor responsible for the above conditions is the archaic system of land ownership prevalent in Latin America. It is known as the latifundia-minifundia system in which like our own Jagirdari system vast tracts of land are held by a few people while the majority of the agriculturists own no land or merely handkerchief size parcels unable to provide family sustenance. The FAO Seminar, known as the "Second Latin American Seminar on Land Problem" held in Montevideo in 1962 gave the following data regarding landownership in the continent:

"In Guatemala 0.15 percent of the farms represent 45 percent of the agriculture land. In Ecuador 0.17 percent of the farms include 37 percent of the farm land. More than half the farm land in Brazil is held by 1.6 percent of the owners. In Nicaragua 362 owners control over one-third of all farming land. The most extreme concentration of land could be observed in Bolivia prior to 1956, where 92 percent of all land was held by 6.4 percent of the people". According to a more recent ECLA study, 1.5 percent of the Latin

Americans own 71.2 percent of all farming land on the continent. In Argentina, the land of famous pampas 80 percent of the land is held in "Estancias" of more than 35,000 acres each. Fifty Argentine families own 75,000 acres each, while eight families own more than 250,000 acres each. One family Alazaga Unzué owns 1,091,586 acres of farm land, while another called Anchor Ena owns 945,195 acres.

In Brazil, where according to press reports a great welcome was accorded to Smt Gandhi, 10 percent of the landed aristocratic family own 77 percent of all privately-owned land in the country. In other words, less than one-fifth of one percent of the population of Brazil own over three-quarters of all arable land. In Chile, another country being visited by the Indian Prime Minister, 64 percent of the privately owned land is held by 1.8 percent of the people. In Brazil, one family estate is larger than the entire United Kingdom, another larger than Portugal; in Chile three estates together constitute an area half that of entire Spain.

Paradise for Landlords

And this is so when sixty percent of the Latin America's current population is involved in farming. Of these, 80 percent do not own any land and work as virtual slaves on the lands of the latifundists—the Latin American jagirdars. Majority of these landless persons do not receive any wages; they are paid in foodstuffs or in 'chits' redeemable (at 70 percent to 80 percent of their value) at the master's stores, or in the right to use a tiny section of master's lands. For this also the user must pay for 33 to 80 percent of his yield. Speaking of the landless labourers who work on the Brazilian 'Fazendas' (states), Dr Roy Nash an eminent authority on land problem in Latin America writes:

"We speak of what is happening in great estates where men work from sun up to sun down, badly fed, without clothes, without housing, full of misery and sickness in full view of officials who fatten on bribes and serve

the landlords and the American companies—It is a hell for the peon and a paradise for the landlord and the corrupt officials".

Poverty, illiteracy and igno-

Most Shocking Conditions

rance—"the three demons emerging like devouring wolves from the latifundia" play havoc with people's lives. Consequently, every possible disease is not only present but also widespread in Latin America, and the victims are increasing. According to a WHO report (for 1965), diphtheria has gone up in Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Peru, Panama, Dominican Republic and Venezuela; encephalitis in Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica and Venezuela; typhoid in Brazil (by 7 times), Haiti, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Uruguay; leprosy in Brazil, the Dominican Republic and Paraguay (where one out of every 2,000 inhabitants are infected by this terrible disease); and finally plague that is rising in the backland of Peru and Brazil. These boosts in diseases are officially recorded; thousands of cases go unnoticed because of lack of investigators and communication facilities.

According to WHO many Latin Americans die of these diseases simply because they cannot drink uninfected water. Over 57 percent of the Latin American do not have adequate water supply facilities. Only 100 million have access to potable water.

It is quite understandable that under such conditions infant mortality is very high. Average for Latin America is 175 per 1,000 births, for USA 31, Canada 43. With regard to medical facilities, there is on the average one hospital bed for 3520 persons in Latin America, 900 in Canada and 780 in USA. In India we have one hospital bed for 3300 people.

Describing the conditions prevalent in Latin America today John Gerassi, the former Latin American correspondent of *Time* magazine writes:

"Most shocking conditions prevail in most parts of the Latin American continent. *Three fourths of the Latin Americans are constantly hungry.* The average calory in-take is 1200,

when normal subsistency is considered 2400 (our average in USA is 3100). Many Latin Americans actually die of starvation. In Haiti peasants are forced to trap skinny pigeons for food. In Peru and Chile many eat every other day, and often average as low as 500 calories daily".

Describing conditions in Chile and Brazil where he traveled thousands of miles for investigation, Gerassi writes:

"In Chile's Central Colchagua and O Higgin's provinces, the peasants are brutalized by police, penalized for selfdefence by judges who are major landlords, forbidden to attend political rallies and forced to work six or even seven (illegal) days a week 17 hours a day for 70 cents daily paid to them in stale bread (galletas) and 'chits' redeemable at 80 percent of their value only in the farm store."

Selling Children

And about Brazil, this is what a veteran American journalist has to write:

"In Brazil's northeast (an area slightly more than half of India) where men die of old age at twentyeight, parents feel fortunate when they are able to sell their children into slavery. My daughter may be used as a prostitute and my son will probably spend the rest of his life working very hard and very long on a Sao Paulo plantation' one father told me when I asked him why he had sold his two children, 'but at least they will eat. My other six children were not so fortunate. They stayed here and they died'. (The Great Fear 1963—pages 24-26). Such are some of the facts and realities of Latin American life created and perpetuated by two sinister forces operating in Latin America, working hand-in-glove—the local landed oligarchies and American capital. In our next article we shall analyse the working of these forces to show how the solutions of the contemporary Latin American problems are bound with the elimination of these two factors for the lives of the people of Latin America.

(To be Continued)

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Gandhiji at the Dawn of Freedom

KSHITISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE Fifteenth of August, 1947, was drawing near. India was going to shake off two centuries of British domination and join the comity of nations as a sovereign independent country. None could have been happier at this prospect than Mahatma Gandhi, looking at the fulfilment of the struggle he had led for nearly three decades—a struggle unique in world history.

But happy he was not. The 16th of August, 1946, had marked the beginning of the Muslim League's "Direct Action" movement for carving out a separate State—Pakistan—for the Indian Muslims. It had started in Calcutta, then spread to Noakhali and set off a chain reaction affecting Bihar, UP, the Punjab and many other parts of India. Senseless killings had taken place, women had been violated, houses and properties burnt. The virulent poison of communalism had equally affected the two major communities—the Hindus no less than the Muslims.

Gandhiji was a witness to this painful phenomenon—the dehumanization of his people, the destruction of all human values, the depletion of the moral reserves of the nation.

The poignancy was made all the more acute for him by the defeatism of the Congress leaders whom he had reared up as his own sons. They had already agreed to the vivisection of India as the price of independence. In their impatience to get into the seats of power, they felt no moral compunction to accept in practice—though not in theory—the two-nation theory of M. A. Jinnah, and undo in one stroke all that the national movement led by Gandhiji had slowly achieved over the decades, namely, the unity of the people of India, irrespective of caste, community or language, in the fight for freedom.

Quite understandably, Gandhiji was sad, sorrowful and soul-stricken. He had repeatedly said that the partition of India could be made only over his dead body, but now that it was coming, he found himself deserted by his lieutenants. To resist Partition, he would have to call on his people, but that would mean turning against Jawaharlal, Vallabhbhai, Rajendra Prasad and who not.....against his sons, as it were.

COMMUNAL atrocities which included loot, arson, murder, rape and *en masse* conversion, affecting nearly 50,000 people, had taken place in Noakhali in October, 1946. When the news reached

him in Delhi, Gandhiji decided to go to Noakhali. Thus began his historic Noakhali Peace Mission. From November 7, 1946, to March 2, 1947, that is, for four months, he walked barefoot from one riot-affected village to another, ignoring the severe winter, restoring confidence and dignity to the panic-stricken Hindus and rekindling the flame of love and brotherliness in the Muslims who had been carried away by passion.

His non-violence was being put to the acid test in Noakhali, said Gandhiji and declared that he would not leave the district till his mission had succeeded and non-violence had been proved to be the strong leaven that he claimed it was.

When, however, news reached him that communal riots had taken place in Bihar and his presence was necessary, he came to Calcutta and left for Patna (March 5, 1947), leaving his unfinished work in Noakhali to his colleagues and co-workers who were enjoined to remain at their respective posts of duty.

From his Bihar tour Gandhiji went to Delhi. He came back to the Khadi Pratisthan Ashram at Sodepur on May 9, intending to return to Noakhali. Meanwhile, the situation in Calcutta had again deteriorated. Riots had claimed many more lives and property. On reaching Sodepur, therefore, Gandhiji discussed the communal situation in the city with Sri Suhrawardy (the then Chief Minister of Bengal), Sri Sarat Chandra Bose and other leaders.

On May 14, 1947, Gandhiji went out to visit riot-affected areas of the city, touring continuously for two hours. He first visited Paikpara in North Calcutta, then went to Bagmari, Goalapara, Kankurgachi, Narkeldanga and Beliaghata—all in the eastern part of the city with concentrations of Muslim population. All along the tour, I was with him in his car as his escort.

From Calcutta, Gandhiji was to go to Howrah. As our motorcade was passing along the Beliaghata Main Road, some Hindus stopped our car near Minabazar and explained to Gandhiji how they had fared at the hands of the Muslims. This irritated Sri S. M. Osman, ex-Mayor of Calcutta and a Muslim League leader, who was with Gandhiji showing him the areas where Muslims had been affected. Sri Osman's irritation so unhinged him that he told Gandhiji in as many words that he very much resented Gandhiji listening to the stories of atrocities committed by Muslims.

When our car reached the Entally area near the Lower Circular Road junction, Sri Osman said that as Gandhiji had already been "biased" against the Muslims, it was no good taking him to Howrah. So saying, he got down from the car in a huff. The Howrah tour had thus to be cancelled abruptly. Pyarelalji, his Secretary, and myself, took Gandhiji back to Sodepur.

Sri Suhrawardy did not at all like the idea of Gandhiji going back to Noakhali again, just as he did not like Gandhiji's first visit to the district after the communal riots in October the previous year. He tried to dissuade Gandhiji from going to Noakhali and assured him that the situation there was quite normal and that the Hindus were not being harassed or threatened, although Gandhiji had been informed by Sri Satish Chandra Das Gupta (whom he had put in overall charge of the Peace Mission before he left Noakhali) and other leaders like Sri Haran Chandra Ghose Chowdhury that tension was very much there, that stray attacks were taking place almost daily and that criminals like Golam Sarwar (he was the chief organizer of the October riots) were moving about scot-free, intimidating the Hindu population.

Anyway, due to the obstructionist tactics of Sri Suhrawardy, Gandhiji's departure for Noakhali had to be repeatedly put off. Ultimately, he left for Delhi on May 15, that is, the day after he visited the disturbed parts of Calcutta. Just after he had left, the situation in the city worsened. On May 19, communal disturbances flared up in Calcutta and on the 24th the police had to open fire.

But Gandhiji did not give up his intention of returning to Noakhali. On August 6, he was at Lahore. In reply to a question put by some local Congress workers, he said: "The rest of my life is going to be spent in East Bengal or West Punjab perhaps the Frontier Province.....I have been yearning to come to the Punjab ever since I came to Delhi, but there were certain forces which were against my coming to this Province. My present place is in Noakhali and I would go there, even if I had to die. But as soon as I am free from Noakhali I will come to the Punjab. I hope I will be free from Noakhali very soon."

GANDHIJI came back to Sodepur in August. By a strange coincidence, the date was the ninth, the fifth anniversary of the August movement which had served the final "Quit India" notice on the British. The British were, at last, going to quit. In six days' time, the Union Jack was going to be hauled down and the Trivarna hoisted in its place. India would be free. But was it "the India of my dreams"? Was it, also, the freedom he had fought for? The year preceding independence had seen the worst fratricidal strifes. Rivers of blood had flowed through the country as brother fought brother savagely. Independence was coming to a partitioned India whose air was heavy with the blood of the innocent victims and the tears of those who had been left alive to mourn.

Gandhiji had come to Sodepur on his way to

Noakhali, where he was going to fulfil his promise of completing the unfinished tour. His post prayer speech in the evening was devoted to the Calcutta riot situation. The next day, the 10th, he said at his prayer meeting that he had thought of going to Noakhali the next day, that is, the 11th but due to pressure from his Muslim friends, had decided to stay on to see if he could contribute to bring back sanity in Calcutta.

On the 12th, Gandhiji said that he had decided to prolong his stay in Calcutta by two more days at the instance of his Muslim friends. The previous night Shaheed Sahib (Sri Suhrawardy) had suggested to him that it would be contrary to Gandhiji's practice to leave Calcutta while the city was going through the horrors of communal strife. He had accepted the suggestion.

Gandhiji proposed to Shaheed Sahib who had come to meet him at Sodepur that both he and Gandhiji should live together under the same roof in some disturbed part of Calcutta, without taking any police or military protection but depending solely on the people. Gandhiji asked him to consult his aged father as well as his daughter and get their consent, instead of giving a hasty reply then and there.

As far as he was concerned, however, Gandhiji had obviously taken the decision, because shortly afterwards, around half past one, he asked me to accompany Sri Osman to find out a suitable place in a Muslim area in Calcutta. He made it clear that any place in a Muslim *bustee*, even a burnt house, would be good for him. Accordingly, Sri Osman and I went to the old Paikpara area in search of a suitable place, but none could be found that would be fit for Gandhiji's use, that is, had space enough to hold his afternoon prayer meetings or even to accommodate the scores of visitors who would be thronging throughout the day and even late into the night.

We next decided to go to Beliaghata in eastern Calcutta, where Muslim houses and *bustees* had been attacked and destroyed by local Hindu young men. Most of the Muslim population had fled from this area. Sri Osman, therefore, was quite unwilling to go there unprotected. On my insistence, he said he could go only with armed police escort. We, therefore, went to the office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police, North, who provided the escort.

After inspecting several houses, I selected the one beside the Essavi Match Factory on the Beliaghata Main Road, a little way off from Raja Rajendralal Mitter Road. Earlier, Sri Osman had come with the message that Sri Suhrawardy had obtained the consent of his father and daughter and had agreed to Gandhiji's proposal to live together.

The next day, August 13, Gandhiji arrived at the Muslim house at Beliaghata in the afternoon. With him were Sri Osman, Prof Nirmal Kumar Bose, Smt Abha Gandhi and Smt Manu Gandhi, Smt Hemprabha Devi, myself and a few others from the Sodepur Ashram.

On our arrival at the Beliaghata house, Gandhiji said that except Prof Bose, Abha and Manu, all others should leave the place without delay and that from now on he should be exclusively in the hands of the Muslim friends. This was an order that had

to be obeyed. With a heavy heart and much against our will, therefore, Smt Hemprabha Devi, myself and others from the Sodepur Ashram, came away. Sri Suhrawardy had not till then arrived. He was to come at about eight in the evening to live with Gandhiji.

It may be mentioned that the selected house—Hydari Mansion—as untenanted, full of dirt and the yard in front was full of mud and puddles of stagnant water. The yard had to be filled up with cinder. The rooms had to be cleaned, disinfected and white-washed. At my request, the Mayor got all this done by the Calcutta Corporation people.

There was also the question of ensuring Gandhiji's safety. By the time I left Beliaghata, I had come to know that a group of Hindu youngmen, armed with revolvers, sten guns and other lethal weapons, were roaming in the locality and that they very much resented Gandhiji coming to the rescue and protection of the Muslims. I had also been told that when I had come to the locality the previous day and was searching for a house, these people, taking me for a Muslim (perhaps because of the imperial that I sport) was about to aim their guns at me, when some one among them recognized me just in the nick of time.

On getting back to the Sodepur Ashram, therefore, I rang up Dr P. C. Ghosh, who was due to succeed Sri Suhrawardy as Chief Minister, and told him about the place and environment where Gandhiji was without police or military protection. Late in the evening, Dr Ghosh posted police pickets near Gandhiji's house.

Before I left Beliaghata, a crowd had already assembled at the gate and wanted to see Gandhiji. When I went to him and told him about them, he said six people could be brought to him. Accordingly, I let in six from among the crowd. Thereupon Gandhiji again asked me to go back to Sodepur. He began talking to these people. He spoke in Hindi while Prof Nirmal Bose, acting as an interpreter, translated it into Bengali. A few minutes later, there was a furore and a large crowd rushed through the gate and stormed into Gandhiji's room. One of these was dead drunk. Another, still in his teens, talked and gesticulated in a most insulting and offensive manner. Some others stood outside, because the room was too small. Later, it transpired that the whole thing had been purposely organized by elements who wanted to force Gandhiji to leave the area.

The angry crowd demanded to know from Gandhiji as to why he had not come *after the 16th August, 1946*, when there was the Great Calcutta Killing, when the Hindus were butchered, their houses burnt and property looted. Gandhiji replied that he was now in Calcutta on his way to Noakhali. He had to postpone his journey as Shaheed Sahib had flown from Delhi just to say that he (Gandhiji) should stay in Calcutta to bring peace. Gandhiji thought that by staying in Calcutta, he would be able to serve the Hindus of Noakhali.

At the prayer meeting he wanted his audience to believe that if Calcutta returned to sanity, the rest of India would be safe, including Noakhali. During the next few days, he bent all his energies to the cause of restoring peace and confidence in the city. He met representatives of both the communities, prominent citizens and political leaders—official as well as non-official. It was clear that Calcutta was his first concern and that he would not leave the city till conditions had become normal again.

CAME the Fifteenth of August. On that day the whole atmosphere suddenly changed as if at the touch of a magic wand. People came out of their houses in their lakhs, Hindus and Muslims embraced each other warmly and affectionately, sweetmeats were distributed, fireworks lit up the night sky of the city and the bitterness of the past was totally forgotten, or so it seemed at the moment. Looking at the jubilant and joyous crowds, one could scarcely believe that violence and vengeance, mistrust and misgiving, had vitiated the air till the day before.

But Gandhiji was not impressed by this sudden effusion of communal amity. He was too farsighted to take the apparent for the real. He knew that the rot had gone too deep. People's minds has been poisoned, the moral fabric of the nation had become weak. To rid itself of the hatred, animosity and rancour that had been bred, the nation, he knew, would have to go through a purgatory of penance and purification of the heart. How valid his apprehensions were was to be proved very shortly.

He felt out of tune with the mood of gaiety that marked the day. His heart was heavy. Sad and withdrawn, he sat silently in his room and in spite of requests declined to come out and see the celebrations and festivities with which the city was welcoming the advent of freedom. It was not a day of merrymaking but a "day of prayer and fasting" — he said.

The next day, the 16th, Gandhiji wrote: "Shaheed Sahaib Suhrawardy and I are living together in a Muslim manzil in Beliaghata. We occupied the house on Wednesday the 13th. The Muslim volunteers are attending to our comforts.....Muslim volunteers do the cooking. Many were eager to come from Khadi Pratisthan for attending but I prevented them." (What Gandhiji refers to as the "manzil" was in fact an old single-storeyed uncouth pucca house, having three rooms only).

On the 19th, Gandhiji visited affected areas in Kanchrapra, Barrackpore, Titagrah and some other places in the industrial belt north of Calcutta. The next day, the 20th, he told a prayer meeting at Khangraputty in the Burra Bazar area of Calcutta that the Central Peace Committee should now consolidate the results so far achieved. There should be Mohalla Peace Committees and they should find

at least one Hindu and one Muslim of clean heart to work together.

The Calcutta Corporation gave a civic reception to Gandhiji on August 24. It was held at the Maidan in the evening. In his reply, Gandhiji said that this was the third time he was receiving an address from the civic body. The first was given to him by Deshbandhu C. R. Das when he was the Mayor. The second was given when Sri Nalini Ranjan Sircar was heading the Corporation. In course of his speech, Gandhiji recalled the late Acharya P. C. Ray under whose roof he had lived for one month in 1901.

On August 27 and 28, Gandhiji held prayer meetings at Metiaburuz and the Science College respectively. On the 29th a meeting was held at Beliaghata on the "Ras Maidan" on Raja Rajendralal Mitter Road.

As *Vande Mataram* was being sung, the audience including Sri Suhrawardy and other Muslims and Hindus on the dais stood up. *Gandhiji alone remained seated.* He said later that Indian culture did not require standing as a mark of respect when a national song or a devotional song (*bhajan*) was being sung. It was an unnecessary importation from the West. A responsive posture was the correct one on such occasions. After all, it was the mental attitude that mattered, not the outward appearance.

On the 30th, Gandhiji attended a prayer meeting at Barasat in 24-Parganas, Calcutta, at the time, was apparently calm. Gandhiji's mind, however, was far from peaceful. After some hesitation, he decided to go to Noakhali in the beginning of September.

There was some demonstration before the Beliaghata house on the 31st evening against the Peace Committee referred to in the Khangraputty prayer speech. Gandhiji told his Secretary, Sri Pyarelal, who had just come from Noakhali: "My resolve to go to Noakhali has collapsed after this evening's happenings. I cannot go to Noakhali, or for that matter anywhere, when Calcutta is in flames. ...You have, for the time being, therefore, to return to Noakhali without me. You can tell the people of Noakhali that if my colleagues, for any reason, cannot be there, they will find me in their midst."

THE 1st of September was Monday, his day of silence. On this day, Gandhiji decided to go on fast. There was a recrudescence of communal violence in the city and the fast was undertaken to rouse the conscience of the people. At about half past eight in the evening, he prepared a statement explaining the reason for which the fast was undertaken.

At about ten in the night, an incident took place right within the Beliaghata house. An angry mob besieged the house. Gandhiji appeared at the doorway of the main hall opening out from a side room. First a *lathi* (stick) was thrown at

him and then a piece of brick. A Muslim standing by the side of Gandhiji was hurt. At the request of the police, Gandhiji drew back.

On the 3rd, Sachindra Nath Mitra and Smritish Banerjee were killed while they were leading peace squads—Sachin in the Murgihatta and Smritish in the Park Circus areas of the city. Sushil Das Gupta, who was with Smritish, was severely wounded and five days later died in the hospital.

Gandhiji's fast continued. Sri Rajagopalachari, the then Governor of West Bengal, Sir Suhrawardy and other leaders came to Gandhiji and tried their utmost to persuade him to give up the fast. Rajaji assured him that the Government was taking every possible step against the miscreants and guarding against possible eruption of violence.

Gandhiji replied that the Government would deal with the situation in its own way. But what would the common people do under the circumstances? They did not want riots or lawlessness but felt powerless to assert themselves. His fast was undertaken on behalf of these common people.

On September 4, an appeal signed by about 40 Hindu and Muslim representatives was brought to Gandhiji, in which the signatories solemnly pledged to maintain communal harmony and resist breach of the peace. Sri Suhrawardy told Gandhiji that their hearts had been touched (by the fast). Rajaji was present as also the Hindu Mahasabha people. At a quarter past nine, Gandhiji broke his fast which had lasted for 73 hours. The next day, the 5th, he still felt too weak to address a prayer meeting.

On the 6th, Gandhiji attended a farewell function arranged on behalf of the citizens of Calcutta to express their gratitude. Referring to the Deputy Mayor's speech, Gandhiji said that the word "farewell" was misapplied. He had made his home among the Muslim friends in Beliaghata and not in Khadi Pratisthan, Sodepur, *which was his permanent home.* He would not allow even Srimati Hemprabha Devi and her co-workers to come to his new abode for looking after him. He said he would be satisfied with what his Muslim friends gave him in the shape of service. He had made no mistake. He was in the habit of living comfortably in the Muslim homes in South Africa. He referred to the martyrdom of Sachin and Smritish and said he was not sorry. Such innocent deaths were necessary to keep the communities together.

Gandhiji left Bengal for Delhi on September 7, 1947, for the last time. During this, his last stay he was in Calcutta for thirty days—six days at Sodepur Ashram and twentyfour days at the Beliaghata house.

When Gandhiji was approached for a message, on the eve of his departure, he wrote it down in Bengali: *Amar Jeevan-i Amar Vani* (My life is my message). He signed it in Bengali as *Mo Ka Gandhi*.

Little did we know, as he left us, that he was soon to vindicate his message with his life as he did on that fateful Friday of January 30, 1948.

Mahatma Gandhi in Pakistan

DEWAN BERINDRANATH

PAKISTANI attitude towards Mahatma Gandhi cannot be easily defined. It would, for example, be a mistake to think that the whole of Pakistan has a clear-cut image of Gandhi before it. The understanding of Mahatma Gandhi in Pakistan has varied from level to level, from region to region, and also from time to time. It is a product of a peculiar feeling of love and hate towards a man who dominated the political scene for 30 crucial years starting from 1918 to 1948.

The image of Mahatma Gandhi as projected through the Muslim League propaganda was none too flattering. Being considered the main adversary of Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, he was given all sorts of names ranging from Churchill's notorious phrase of a 'Naked Fakir', to a modern Rasputin. In spite of Gandhi's Herculean efforts to maintain communal amity and peace between the two countries, the Partition saw a still sharper rise in anti-Gandhi propaganda. Muslim League propagandists went out of their way to dub him as the 'genius' behind 'India's mischief'. Men like Abdul Rab Nishtar who acted as Jinnah's main contact in the NWFP could not stomach the fact that Gandhiji had close personal relations with the Khan Brothers who were considered the biggest internal enemies of Pakistan. Pakistani publicity media, even though they had yet to acquire the sophisticated technique for which they came to be distinguished later on, did

assiduously try to build an image of Gandhi as a reactionary Hindu who in spite of his lip-service to ideas or communal amity, brotherhood of man, and non-violence, was bent upon creating an Indian empire based on Hindu supremacy.

To some extent this anti-Gandhi feeling was a product of the personal animosity Jinnah had towards Gandhi. He, for example, turned down a well-meaning suggestion which among others was endorsed by Lord Mountbatten, late Shahid Suhrawardy and Choudhary Khaliq-uz-Zaman to issue a joint appeal with Gandhi for maintaining peace on the sub-continent. Being a stickler to constitutional propriety, he rejected the proposal on the ground that since he was head of the State of Pakistan and Gandhi was a mere private citizen, it would not be proper for him to make any joint appeal with him. He could do so only with a man of his equal status. He refused to do so with Nehru since he was only a Prime Minister. Mountbatten was ruled out because being an Englishman his name would carry no weight.

All this feeling of annoyance based primarily on an inferiority complex suddenly changed into undiluted admiration on January 31, 1948. The news of Gandhiji's martyrdom struck Pakistani hearts like a lightning. To quote a report in *Imroze* of that day, an Urdu daily of Lahore: "For the first few hours people in Lahore looked dumbfounded. The shock was too

severe for them to make any comment. After this, hysterical scenes of crying and weeping were witnessed in many areas which in the pre-Partition days were considered strongholds of Muslim League and had never shown any admiration for Gandhi."

Newspapers on the following day were in such a great demand that many papers in Karachi and Lahore had to print three editions on the same day. The announcement of Jinnah's death later was perhaps the only occasion when so much interest was evinced in what the newspapers wrote. Even Jinnah for once left his obsession with his notoriously favoured description of "Mr. Gandhi being a most important leader of the Hindus" and was charitable enough to pay him tribute as an important leader of his "country". It was subsequently revealed that Jinnah for quite some time wanted to write the word 'community', but was persuaded by Liaquat Ali Khan to use 'country' instead.

The feeling of popular anguish and grief was born out of many factors. The foremost of them was that Gandhi died defending the lives and honour of the helpless Muslim minority in India. To quote the words of a Pakistani columnist writing shortly after Gandhi's death, "Suddenly the people in Pakistan realised that they had lost a great friend who could be depended upon to keep India's jingoist elements in check." Coupled with this was the memory associated with

years of common struggle. In spite of the Muslim League propaganda which had preached separatism and two-nation theory the people in Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar and Dacca could not forget that the name of Gandhi had enthused them as much as the people in India for the liberation of their country.

In N.W.F.P. the people's grief was particularly strong. It was reported that fire was not lit for the whole day following Gandhi's death in many homes in Peshawar and Karachi. I have with me a particularly moving letter which an old Urdu writer Chaudhary Akbar Ali wrote to his daughter in India shortly after Gandhi's death. It says:

Naeema Dear,
Please accept my heart-felt condolences on the loss which all of us have suffered in the death of a man whom I have never met nor for whom I had any special admiration. Somehow I feel that by killing him somebody has killed perhaps the most precious part of myself and has broken the fine China jar in which was stored the wisdom of centuries. (Naqoosh Lahore, Letters November 1958).

Faiz Ahmed Faiz, the well-known poet and the then Chief Editor of *Pakistan Times* group of newspapers along with Mian Iftikharuddin had specially flown to Delhi to attend the funeral. Faiz had written in his inimitable style perhaps the shortest poem he had ever composed the open-line of which read "*The darkness of the gloom of night has devoured the brightness of the sun of life*".

Other Pakistani writers and poets especially Ibrahim Jalees and Zahir Kashmiri wrote memorable lines on the occasion. When viewed in contrast with the anti-Indian writings of these two in present day, one wonders how much distance the intellectuals of the sub-continent have travelled in the last twenty years.

Years following Gandhi's martyrdom have seen a very confusing picture emerging about his place in history in Pakistani thinking. There is a great deal of admiration for the way he tried to restrain leaders like Sardar Patel in their anti-Pakis-

tan attitude. Quite a few Pakistani writers including politicians like Chaudhary Mohammed Ali and Feroz Khan Noon have given credit to Gandhi "as a reasonable man who had understood the hazards involved in Indian expansionism". Coupled with it is the attitude of some of the politicians who enjoyed some contact with Gandhi. A notable example is Chaudhary Khaliq-uz-Zaman, the U. P. Muslim League leader who is now regarded as an elder statesman in the pro-government Muslim League. In his *Pathway to Pakistan* one notes an amusing fact that while he always refers to Gandhi as either as "Mahatma Gandhi" or "Gandhiji" words which were anathema to Jinnah and his ilk, he treats Jinnah very casually by referring to him as a mere "Mr. Jinnah" and has never addressed him as the Quade-e-Azam. This might have been due to personal likes and dislikes and the fact that refugee politicians in Pakistan in spite of political differences did maintain deep regard for Gandhi the man. No wonder that Karachi, the city most favoured by the U. P. refugees maintained till very late a statue of Mahatma Gandhi which used to be duly garlanded on the occasion of his birth anniversary. Contrary to a general impression, it was not the Sindhi Hindu alone who had shown such reverence to him, but a large number of U. P. and Sindhi Muslims also used to join in the observance on the occasion.

Admiration for Gandhi is however limited to his role just immediately before and after the Partition. Pakistani historians like I. H. Qureshi and others take pains to point out that while Gandhi fell victim to extremist Hindu communalism and has thus earned a place in the cause of communal harmony, his role in the pre-independence era was essentially a negative one, as far as the Muslims of the sub-continent were concerned.

The Pakistani predicament about Gandhi is born out of a contradictory phenomenon. While no Pakistani historian could deny the element of martyrdom in Gandhi—which a

Muslim Pakistani poet had once called equal to that of Hussain, the grandson of the prophet—it would be very difficult for any Pakistani to wing the official Pakistani line, his theory of a united nationhood. Along with this is the problem that Gandhi was considered the main rival of Jinnah throughout his career.

Since the present regime is eager to create a mystique by glorifying Jinnah at the cost of other Pakistani politicians who followed him, it becomes difficult for any one to excuse Gandhi for opposing Quade-e-Azam. Various biographies of Jinnah and 'histories' of Muslim League and Pakistan movement remain full of venom against "the obstructionist tactics" Gandhi had adopted during the pre-independence era against the creation of a separate Muslim State.

Attempt is also made to make fun of the non-violence movements like non-cooperation, Harijan uplift and rural self-sufficiency. This, in itself, will not be very objectionable, many of us in India do also feel that much of the super-structure of Gandhian thought will have to be disregarded so that he could be appreciated in a better perspective. Where the Pakistani intellectual differs from his Indian counterpart is the fact that while the approach of an Indian liberal who is critical of Gandhi is generally based on modern secular concepts, the inevitable grouse of the Pakistani is that he refused to treat Indian Muslims as a separate nation and had thus tried to stall the partition of the country. The only use Pakistani propaganda media seems to have for Gandhi is to talk either tauntingly about him as the man who through 'gimmicks' like non-violence, non-cooperation and simple living, wanted to fight Muslim aspirations. Conversely, references are also made about India, saying that "Look, this has become of the land where Gandhi had fallen a martyr to the communal Hindu frenzy." One could almost predict that Pakistani reaction to any communal trouble in India would contain some reference to the

name of Gandhi. Incidentally, this seems to be the only occasion when the reference is made with some admiration.

All this does not however mean that Gandhi has no admirers left in the country. Recently Nurul Amin, the leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly and the first Muslim League Chief Minister of East Pakistan had written his impressions about the early days of the creation of Pakistan. In this he makes a special mention about the fact that but for the fast unto death Gandhiji had undertaken, eighteen crores of rupees which India owed to Pakistan would not have been released and Pakistan would have been in the most difficult financial situation. To quote him: "The treasury seemed almost empty. There was no money to pay to a large number of government servants who were in dire need of their salaries because most of them had suffered the brunt of the partition. The institutions and devices like foreign loans and deficit financing were unheard of in those days. At that time, it was Mahatma Gandhi who through his innate sense of fair play came to the rescue of Pakistan and forced Indian leaders like Sardar Patel to give us our due. But for that money one does not know how we could have managed in those early difficult days."

A more serious appraisal of Gandhi's position in the history of the sub-continent was made by G.M. Sayyed, the former Chief Minister of Sind, who is also considered the tallest among the liberal intellectuals of Sind. In his recent Sindhi book *Gems of History*, he wrote about Gandhi, "as a leader the greatest achievement of his was the fact that no prophet or leader in world history in his lifetime had such a great following. It goes to his credit that he devised a method which involved least of bloodshed to face the mightiest of empire of the day. No historian of the sub-continent could ever fail to mention his name without utmost deference due to a man who had done more for the freedom of his people than any one else."

It is an index of the peculiar intellectual climate of Pakistan that Sayyed was interned in his house and restrictions^o were placed on his meeting outsiders after the publication of the book. On his writ petition to the High Court, against the executive order which was incidentally argued by A.K. Brohi, the former Law Minister, the passage about Gandhi was specifically cited by the Government as particularly offensive.

The Judges agreed with the official contention. The irony of the situation will become more apparent when one realises that in spite of the system of government prevalent in Pakistan, the judiciary on the whole has been fairly independent and fearless. On political matters the same High Court had given quite a few judgements against the regime, but on such a seemingly trivial affair as that of the opinion about a man like Gandhi, Judges' opinion was both clear and stringent. They upheld the Government plea that by equating "Gandhi with prophets and leaders in history, G.M. Sayyed had indirectly tried to belittle the reverence of prophets".

At another place, he had said that, "the future historian has yet to pronounce his considered judgement whether the path of Quad-e-Aazum Jinnah or Mahatma Gandhi would have been more appropriate for the people of the Indo-Pak sub continent." This passage too was taken exception to and the High Court ruled that it was tantamount to blasphemy. In the opinion of their lordships, such passages could also injure the feelings of a large section of Pakistani people and could thus create danger to law and order as well.

It is immaterial whether action was taken against a man like G.M. Sayyed for saying such things, or whether Nurul Amin has any appreciable support on the subject of his views on Gandhi. More important is the fact that in spite of an organised attempt to present a distorted image of Gandhi in Pakistan, there are elements who continue to remain appreciative of his role and do not hesitate to put for-

ward their views. One can hope that the day will come when the voice of intellectual liberalism will become stronger and would thus pave the way for a better Indo-Pak understanding.

Meanwhile, one would do well to realise the fact that while ruling junta in Pakistan has obviously been responsible for projecting a distorted image of Gandhi, they have been directly aided and abetted by the way many of the so-called admirers of Gandhi in India try to present his views. In recent years, there has been more emphasis in India on Gandhi as the upholder of antiquated values and enunciator of a path distinctly different from that followed by Nehru. This has been done at the cost of Gandhi's image as a freedom fighter, as a secular nationalist and a martyr to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity and Indo-Pak amity.

Coupled with this misplaced emphasis on Gandhi's philosophy and misuse of Gandhi's name, is the political phenomenon which has given rise to reactionary communalism. One communal riot in India provides more material to Pakistan propaganda than all the volumes of falsehood they could ever dream of compiling.

Gandhi's admirers in India also failed to appeal to the Muslim intelligentsia about Gandhi's contribution to modern Indian thought and nationalist struggle. Very few books on Gandhi have been written in Urdu, leave alone Pakistan, even in India. The need is not merely to have a few Radio programmes in Urdu or publish some commissioned pamphlets and booklets on Gandhi in an indifferent style by mediocre writers as is the prevailing custom, but to project Gandhi in the language and the idiom which the Muslim mind understands.

This might appear to be a difficult task but is certainly not insurmountable. If Gandhi's philosophy could inspire a Muslim intellectual of the stature of Maulana Azad, there is no reason why it could not have some appeal for some of the more enlightened sections of Muslim opinion both in India and Pakistan.

Gandhi's Concept of Ram Rajya

S. N. BASRA

EVERY social reformer has a vision of an ideal before him. It is this vision which guides him in determining the course of action in his social life. Mahatma Gandhi's professed aim was the awakening of the slumbering masses of India and leading them towards a new social order. As such, it was natural for him to think of an ideal social set-up. He used to describe it as 'Ram Rajya'. What exactly he meant by it is not very clear for he nowhere explained it conclusively either to his own satisfaction or to his followers' satisfaction. His views about Ram Rajya are scattered in his various writings and speeches and he continued to elaborate and elucidate them till the last day of his life.

Mahatma Gandhi was not a systematic academic thinker in the field of metaphysics and political philosophy. He himself once said, "I am not built for academic writings. Action is my domain". It is because of this that his ideas about Ram Rajya are not systematic and well worked out. He did not use logical procedure and scientific methodology as the positivists do. He provided only empirical suggestions. He did not have either the requisite time nor the philosophic competence to work out mature expositions of his political ideas and precepts. Whatever goes as his political philosophy, has been reconstructed into a system by others by developing suggestions and plans contained in his writings and speeches. He was only an inspired teacher and

a prophet. He was neither a Vivekananda nor a Marx. Instead he was more close to Buddha—pouring forth the results of his deepest feelings and his most sincere realisations of truth.

Gandhiji believed in "the all-embracing living light" which he called *Sacchidanand*, *Brahma*, *Ram* or simply *Satya*. His Ram Rajya is a society based on *Satya* and *Ahimsa*. Realisation of *Satya* and *Ahimsa* was realisation of Ram. Spiritual truth according to him cannot be realised by dialectical skill or conceptual cognition as is supposed by the Hegelians but by spiritual experience, pure and disciplined holy life and by the persistent efforts to concretize the norms of *Ahimsa* in one's actions and motivations. "Reason is a poor thing in the midst of temptations" said Mahatma Gandhi "faith is our only Rock of Ages". We find in him a synthesis of Vedantic spiritual metaphysics and Jain-Buddhist-Vaishnav ethics of *Ahimsa*.

Though Gandhiji refused to go into the details of Ram Rajya, a society based on *Satya* and *Ahimsa*, yet its broad features are clear. His Ram Rajya will have no state. In this society man would become so much self-controlled that no external authority will be needed. It will be enlightened anarchy. To Gandhiji, state came into existence to check the selfish impulses of human beings. It would become superfluous when every person achieves complete inner *Swarajya*.

These views are contrary to the views expressed by Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, Hegel and Green, who hold that state is necessary for the moral upli-

fement of man and for the attainment of real freedom. Gandhiji was of the opinion that an individual as an individual, can achieve moral upliftment and attain true freedom through individual efforts of self-enlightenment. He nowhere tries to prove it but takes it for granted.

Gandhiji will have no state in his Ram Rajya because it is rooted in violence. As the state is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence. His views, in this respect, are in agreement with Machiavelli, Hobbes, Marx and Bakunin who regard state as a power system. It is difficult, however, to understand and how he formed such an opinion, for it is inconsistent with his views of human nature. If he formed this opinion by observing the actual functioning of state, then the foundation is too weak to make this sweeping observation.

There shall be non-violent democracy. It will carry out its work by persuasion and not by force. There will be police and it may even be armed but the recruits will be firm believers in *Ahimsa*. Similarly there shall be prisons but they would act as reformatories, hospitals and schools combined in one. Their job will be to convert the criminals to a nonviolent way of life. Life would be based on peace and mutual cooperation. *Satyagraha* shall be the chief weapon in the hands of the people to curb any excessive use of power by the authorities. *Dharma* shall be the ruling factor. It will strike a balance between the individual's desire for unobstructed freedom and the society's requirement of an orderly disciplined

The author is Lecturer in Political Science, Hislop College, Nagpur

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life.

This stateless, non-violent society based on truth, shall be highly decentralised, politically and economically. Centralisation is not compatible with non-violence. It cannot be sustained without any adequate use of force. It kills individual initiative and diminishes the opportunities of attaining self-governing. He would give maximum measure of autonomy to villages in managing their affairs. He would encourage cottage industries and try to abolish heavy industry altogether if possible.

This society shall be based on *Varna Vyavastha*. It shall have four classes corresponding to old *Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya* and *Shudra*. With a view to maintaining of equality between the various classes and preventing any idea of superiority or inferiority from creeping into the system, these classes shall not be adopted as a means of amassing wealth but only for earning livelihood and serving the community.

His society shall firmly believe in the ideal of non-possession. Only absolutely necessary things shall be possessed by the people. Nobody shall amass anything beyond his required minimum. Those who shall have too much, shall retain that as a trust for the benefit of the whole society.

Every person shall be earning an honest living by the sweat of his brow. There will be no parasites. Everybody shall be required to work with his or her hands to produce wealth for the community. All will know the dignity of labour and will be proud in doing so.

In a nutshell, we may say that statelessness, non-violent democracy, political and economic decentralisation, *Varna Vyavastha*, non-possession, trusteeship and dignity of manual labour are the main features of Ram Rajya.

*

It has been said that Gandhism is Marxism minus violence. To take this statement literally shall be doing gross injustice to both Gandhi and Marx. Even Vinoba Bhave, the greatest

living Gandhian, has written in his introduction to K. G. Mashruwala's book *Gandhi and Marx* about the great difference between the two.

It might be interesting and rewarding if Gandhian Ram Rajya is compared with Marxian ultimate stage of social development.

Both believe that state is a power system and it will be no more in their ideal society. But whereas for Marx it has a class character and is a tool in the hands of the exploiting class, for Gandhiji, it has no class character. For Marx, this state will be no more because there will be no exploiting class. For Gandhiji, it will be no more because everybody will achieve inner *Swarajya*.

Both believe in political decentralisation but whereas Gandhiji wanted it at every stage and period and for all times, Marx wants the state to be all-powerful in the transitional stage as solid and strong as the iron hammer.

Gandhiji aims at the disintegration of machine age itself. His Ram Rajya shall be composed of small village communities more or less self-sufficient and self-supporting, with their cottage industries catering to their minimum demands. Marx aims at complete industrialisation. He wants a fully developed machine age. Marxian society is a society based on successful industrialisation and flowing in abundance.

Ram Rajya shall be based on *Varna Vyavastha* whereas Marxian ideal society shall have no classes. Gandhiji's society shall be believing in non-possession and will always aim at reducing the wants of the people to a bare minimum. For Gandhiji, less wants we have, the more happy we shall be. Marxian society is based on controlled possession of material things, will aim at giving more and more material benefits and will permit everybody to enjoy the fruits of his labour. From each according to his ability to each according to his needs shall be the guiding principle.

Both will control the excess wealth in their ideal society. But whereas Gandhiji will permit

the rich persons to hold it in trust for society, Marx will take it over and entrust it to society as a whole for management and ownership.

Both believe in the dignity of labour. For Gandhiji, everybody shall be working to earn his bread. In the Marxian society, He who shall not work, neither 'shall he eat' will be the guiding factor. But whereas Gandhi means by work manual labour, for Marx, it is any kind of work which is socially useful; it may be manual or intellectual.

*

It will be interesting if Gandhian concept of Ram Rajya is viewed in the light of modern criticism. Till recently, books written on Gandhiji were mostly by persons who are associated with him and who regarded him and his thought as holy and sacred. It was because of this that the real assessment of his philosophy could not be possible in the past. It is only recently that Gandhi an thought and ethics has been subjected to a searching criticism in the light of which it is now becoming possible to evaluate his ideas in

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a true intellectual spirit and assign him a position among political thinkers.

Gandhiji's Ram Rajya is to be based on *Satya* and *Ahinsa*. Such a thing is possible only if there is anything like absolute truth and absolute Ahinsa. Even for Gandhiji, truth, morality and non-violence were never absolute but relative. He judged everything by the acid test of whether a particular course will help what was in the larger interest true and moral—the ending of British imperialism. It would therefore be dishonest for anybody to claim that Gandhiji was sticking to absolute morality and absolute truth in the absence of which it is exceedingly difficult to accept how Gandhiji's Ram Rajya can be found on it.

His views about state are also not acceptable. To us, state is not a cage but a nest which protects and fosters. It exists to provide conditions necessary for the development of human per-

sonality. Present-day defective states call for reform and not for destruction.

Similarly, his views on *Varna Vyavastha* in whatever guarded fashion they may be presented, are simply amazing, to say the least.

His views about non-violent democracy based on non-possession, love and mutual cooperation have attracted a very sound criticism from Adi H. Doctor. To quote in his own words, Long before Gandhi, a Christ, a Buddha, and a Zoroaster had preached the old doctrine of love and peace, of shedding acquisitiveness and helping others. But naught availed and man continued in the old rut. Wars did take place and the rich did continue to exploit the poor. Unless therefore one has greater confidence in Gandhi than any have had in Christ or Buddha, one cannot expect his mission to succeed."

A fundamental change in

human nature is not possible. As long as egoistic tendencies exist in man, so long would evil, exploitation and wars continue to plague the world.

Time and again, history has shown us that society is governed by objective laws which can be discovered and understood. Any change in social set-up can only be brought about by working alongwith those forces and manipulating them and not by working against them or by ignoring them. All those who tried to bring changes by ignoring these forces not only did not succeed but ultimately paid for with their lives. Christ was crucified, Socrates drank the cup of poison, Guru Teg Bahadur, Guru Arjun Dev were murdered, and Gandhiji was shot dead.

Whatever credit we may give to Gandhiji for his humanism, as a social reformer, he was nearer to utopian socialists than to anybody else.

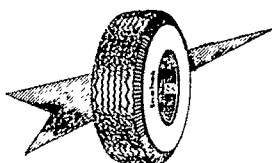
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Partition in Retrospect

H. M. JAIN

TWENTY years after Independence it is tempting to look back and review the events leading to the partition of India in order to find out if there was an inevitability in the course of history. Was it possible to avoid partition of the country and achieve freedom with unity? Was there any tactical error or mistake of judgement committed by any one that changed the course of Indian history?

It is the opinion of Maulana Azad that India came quite close to achieving freedom without sacrificing her unity, but lost that opportunity because of an indiscretion committed by Jawaharlal Nehru. With the first of these views perhaps there may be general agreement, but the second is open to doubt and dispute.

It is a remarkable event in Indian history that for a while in 1946 both the Congress and the Muslim League came to accept a plan which envisaged transfer of power without division of the country. This was the Cabinet Mission plan announced on May 16, 1946. It will be recalled that this Plan provided a three-tier government for India in which residuary powers would belong to the provinces and the Union Government would be confined to barely three subjects, namely, Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications. The provinces shall be free to form Groups and decide what powers, if any, shall be delegated to the Group Government. Three such groups were envisaged, namely;

Section A, comprising UP, CP, Bombay, Madras, Bihar and Orissa;

Section B, comprising Punjab, Sind and NWFP; and

Section C, comprising Bengal and Assam.

The idea was that provinces grouped in these sections would be autonomous within and free from interference from the Union except in respect of the three specified subjects. In this way the desire of the Muslims, concentrated predominantly in Sections B and C, for internal autonomy would be satisfied and their fear of Hindu tyranny allayed.

The acceptance of the Plan by the Congress as well as the League was "a glorious event in the history of the freedom movement in India." (Azad). Here was a scheme which could deliver the country of foreign rule without impairing its unity and integrity.

What was it then which led to its miscarriage? Who was responsible for its rupture? Can the responsibility be fixed on any one single individual? or event? What happened after the Plan had been approved by the two major political parties, namely, the Congress and the League.

It may be recalled that the Cabinet Mission Plan had been accepted by the Council of the League on June 6, 1946. The Congress approval followed by June 26. However, the AICC was still to ratify the decision of June 26 made by the Working Committee and for this purpose a meeting of the AICC was convened on July 7, 1946. The ratification of the CWC decision was a formal matter but the more significant event of the day

was the election of Jawaharlal Nehru to the Congress presidency.

On July 10, 1946, after he had been elected Congress President, Jawaharlal Nehru chose to call a press conference. At this conference he launched into what Michael Brecher calls "one of the most fiery and provocative statements in his forty years of public life". According to Maulana Azad, this press conference of Nehru changed the course of Indian history. What happened at this Conference?

Nehru was asked by pressmen if the acceptance of the Plan by the AICC meant that the Congress had accepted the plan in toto. Nehru stated in reply that the Congress "was completely unfettered by agreements and free to meet all situations as they arise". He was further asked if this meant that the Cabinet Mission plan could be modified. Nehru answered in the affirmative and emphasised that the Congress was free to change or modify the plan as it thought best.

As Maulana Azad writes in his autobiography, "Jawaharlal's statement was wrong. It was not correct to say that the Congress was free to modify the Plan as it pleased". This statement therefore came to Jinnah, who was deeply distrustful of the Hindus, as a bombshell. It amounted to an act of direct sabotage. It was, Michael Brecher writes, a "tactical error". Even Leonard Mosley reflects philosophically: "It was a moment in history when circumspection should have been the order of the day. There was much to be gained by silence. The fortunes of India were in the balance, and one false move could upset them."

Dr Jain is Lecturer in Political Science, Allahabad University.

Nehru's statement did prove to be a false move which gave Jinnah the opportunity to upset the agreement on the Cabinet Mission plan. It should be noted that Jinnah had accepted the Mission plan reluctantly, only because nothing better could be attained. He was highly suspicious of the Hindus and Nehru's statement confirmed the worst of his fears. He at once called a meeting of the League Council to review the situation arising out of what he called epudiation by the Congress President of the Cabinet Mission plan *unilaterally*. Now that the Congress President had declared that they were free to change the scheme through their majority in the Constituent Assembly, the League was no longer bound by its earlier decision of acceptance. Jinnah could well argue that if the Congress could change so many times while the British were still in the saddle, what would be the fate of the Muslims in the Hindu raj after the transfer of power had taken place.

Golden Opportunity

The Muslim League Council met at Bombay on July 27, 1946 and passed a resolution withdrawing its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission plan and deciding to resort to Direct Action for the attainment of Pakistan. It also decided to observe August 16, 1946 as the Direct Action Day.

The Muslim League since then never retraced its step. It never looked back, not even for a moment. Nehru's statement gave Jinnah a golden opportunity to re-open the compromise on the Cabinet Mission plan. It further gave him what Brecher calls "an incomparable wedge to press more openly for Pakistan on the grounds of Congress tyranny". Maulana Azad, Nehru's closest friend and associate, regretfully writes: "Jawaharlal is one of my dearest friends and his contribution to India's national life is second to none. He has worked and suffered for Indian freedom, and since attainment of independence he has become the symbol of our national unity and progress. I

have nevertheless to say with regret that he is at times apt to be carried away by his feelings. Not only so, but sometimes he is so impressed by theoretical considerations that he is apt to underestimate the realities of a situation. The mistake of 1946 proved...costly".

With the withdrawal of the League's acceptance of the Cabinet Mission plan the hope of a united India was shattered for ever. The Muslim League decided to "bid good-bye to constitutional methods". It decided to fight for Pakistan and accept nothing short of it and to use violence if necessary in furtherance of its goal.

Panic and Stupefaction

Jawaharlal's press conference not only threw the Muslim League into panic but also stupefied the Congress. Maulana Azad tells us, "I was extremely perturbed by this new development. I saw that the scheme for which I had worked so hard was being destroyed through our own action". A meeting of the CWC was hurriedly convened on August 8, 1946 and it substantially disowned what Nehru had said at the Press Conference. It reaffirmed the decision of the AICC taken on July 7, making it clear that they accepted the scheme in its entirety.

But Jinnah had had enough of such resolutions and assurances. As Leonard Mosley writes, "It did not take him long to convince himself and his followers that the whole thing had been a great mistake; that in accepting the Cabinet Mission plan and compromising with his goal of an independent Pakistan he had made a fundamental error; that Congress was just as tricky and dangerous as ever". Nehru's speech thus set in motion a chain of events that were to culminate in the division of India and creation of Pakistan.

That Nehru's press statement was a mistake is quite evident. It is not equally evident that if this statement had not been made the course of Indian history would have been different. Who can say that if Nehru had not made the press statement of

July 10, the Muslim League finally abandoning its goal of Pakistan would have been content with provincial autonomy in a federal Union of India as envisaged in the Mission plan? It is extremely difficult to answer this question. History does not admit of any ifs and buts. Our conclusion must be based on facts and hard facts alone however distasteful they may be.

Brief Facts

The facts may be stated briefly here.

(1) The Congress Working Committee meeting on August 8, 1946 made it clear that the views of the Congress on the Cabinet Mission Plan were finally and irrevocably expressed by the AICC resolution passed on July 7, 1946 and that no individual, not even the Congress President, could change it. With the passing of this resolution there was no longer any doubt that "the Congress had accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan in its entirety. If the Muslim League accepted our Resolution, it could return to the early position without any loss of prestige" (Azad). That the League did not do so raised the question whether it was serious or sincere in its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan.

(2) The League's acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan was meant to be a stage in the "establishment of complete sovereign Pakistan, in the consummation of the goal of independence for the major nations, Muslims and Hindus".

(3) While signifying its willingness to cooperate with the constitution-making body of the Cabinet Mission Plan, the League Resolution reiterates "in order that there may be no manner of doubt in any quarter, that the attainment of the goal of a complete sovereign Pakistan still remains the unalterable objective of the Muslims in India, for the achievement of which they will, if necessary, employ every means in their power, and consider no sacrifice or suffering too great".

In the face of this evidence, can it be said that the League

had abandoned the goal of Pakistan while accepting the Cabinet Mission Plan? Is it not clear that the League had accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan only because it looked upon the scheme as the prelude to the establishment of a sovereign and independent Pakistan? The League made it clear that it would seek its goal at the earliest opportunity and by every means and manner including force and violence.

Nehru's press statement provided the League with a peg on which it could hang its plan of direct action; this it would have found in any case. The League was determined on its objective. It was only looking for a suitable strategy. The strategy would have been forged in any case. Nehru's press statement came to them as a godsend. It is a mistake to think that the League had

resigned itself to provincial autonomy within a Federal Union. It was bound to re-open that question, sooner or later and this it had made abundantly clear even in its June 6 acceptance Resolution.

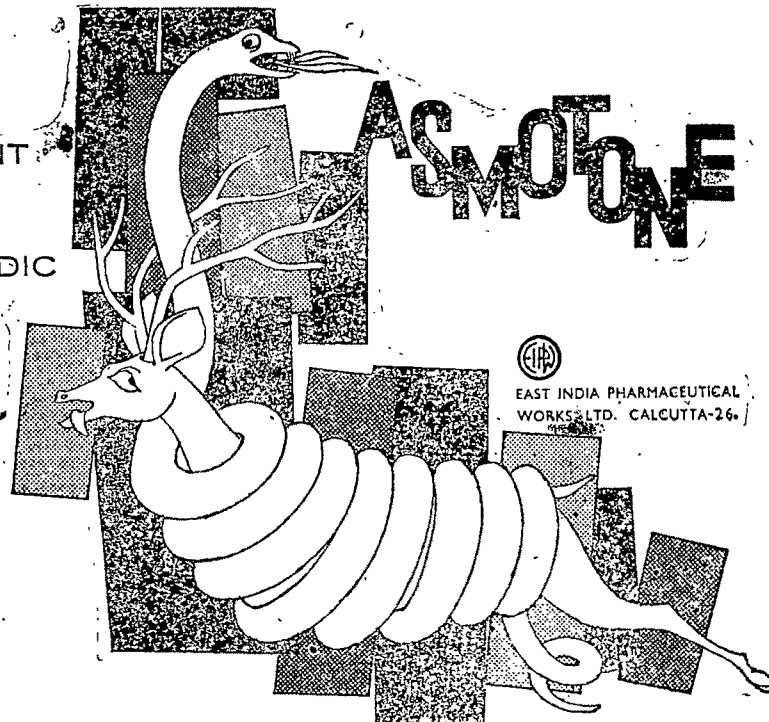
In the circumstances it is unnecessary to give much importance to Nehru's press statement of July 10. Replying to Maulana Azad's charge Nehru once remarked that the Maulana was prone to take too personal a view of historical events, and that was his mistake. The truth is that Jinnah and the League were encouraged in their course of direct action by the whole machinery of the British Government. Azad admits in his autobiography that "throughout Calcutta, the military and the police were standing by but remained inactive while innocent men and women were being

killed".

If the Viceroy had dismissed the Suhrawardy Government in Bengal and taken stern action against hooliganism and violence before it was too late the League would have considered twice before launching upon a course of violence and rejecting that of constitutionalism. It was the British sympathy and attitude which encouraged Jinnah on and which he fully exploited.

It is therefore unhistorical to say that Nehru's press statement turned the course of Indian history. The logic of history is too ruthless and rigorous to admit of alterations at the hand of a single individual however great he may be. In any case, as argued above, Nehru's press statement repudiated subsequently by the AICC cannot be given that decisive importance for Indian history.

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Gandhi and the Partition

P. C. ROY CHAUDHURY

M. Chalapathi Rao in his recently published book *Gandhi and Nehru* has observed: "Gandhi was throughout protesting against partition; he was not a party to it in any way, but he did not oppose it in the way he could have opposed it."

Similar observations have been made elsewhere and some think that C. Rajagopalachari, Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel were the main persons behind the Partition.

The facts, however, appear to be otherwise. When Gandhi, Nehru and others were put in prison in 1942, there was, no doubt, a great opportunity for C.R. to work out the Pakistan scheme. After he had made some headway, the matter was squarely put before Gandhi. Pyarelal who was so very closely associated with Gandhi has mentioned this in his *Mahatma Gandhi: the Last Phase* (Vol I, pp. 68 and 69):

"During Gandhiji's fast in the Detention Camp, therefore, when the jail gates were temporarily forced open, Rajaji took the opportunity to put before him a formula for bringing about a settlement between the Congress and the Muslim League. The salient features of his formula, later known as the Rajaji Formula, were: (1) The Muslim League should endorse the Indian demand for independence and co-operate with the Congress in the formation of a Provisional Interim Government for the transitional period; (2) the Congress would agree after the termination of war to the appointment of a commission for demarcating contiguous districts in the North-West and North-East of India, wherein Muslims were in absolute

majority; (3) in the areas thus demarcated a plebiscite of all the inhabitants held on the basis of adult franchise or some equivalent device would decide the issue of separation of India. If the majority decided in favour of forming a sovereign State separate from India, such decision should be given effect to; (4) in the event of separation, mutual agreement would be entered into for safeguarding defence, commerce, communications, and other essential matters; and finally (5) these terms would be binding only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility for the governance of India.

"Gandhiji did not need a moment's consideration to give his approval to it. Armed with his approval, Rajaji approached Jinnah, the President of the Muslim League."

This shows that Gandhi had tentatively agreed to partition even when he was in prison. After his release Gandhi was clearly anxious for a discussion with Jinnah. It was the same Gandhi who was of the view that he should be cut into two but India should not be vivisected that had seen Jinnah eighteen times in one month and nothing but partition appears to have been discussed. Jinnah was pressurising more and more and Gandhi by his action gave him a stature among the Muslims that Jinnah probably did not have at that moment. The parleys covering eighteen days came to a finish on September 27, 1944 without any concrete result for Gandhi and the Congress but clearly with a great victory for Jinnah who could dictate terms as he was taken by the Congress and the

British Government in India as the man who held the keys to the solution of the problem.

The *Sapru Correspondence* which has been deposited in the National Library at Calcutta throws a flood of light on what went on. This *Correspondence* consists of very valuable documents which have not been properly researched on. From one of the letters (G-43) in the *Correspondence*, it appears that as late as July 20, 1942 Gandhi had replied to one Fakir Nazir Ahmad that he was agreeable to Pakistan on certain conditions in reply to Nazir Ahmad's suggestion for settling the communal matter in his letter dated July 17, 1942 (G-42 in the *Correspondence*). The correspondence further shows that Jinnah had refused at one time to see Gandhi if he posed to be speaking for the Muslims as well.

Sapru had advised Gandhi to form a Committee of representatives from the Muslim League, Congress, Hindu Mahasabha and the Depressed Castes to discuss certain points but Gandhi was not very keen about it. In a letter dated October 25, 1944 Gandhi had requested Sapru to call a conference to discuss Pakistan issue in the light of his talks with Jinnah although he had written previously on October 14, 1944 that the public was responsible for the failure of the talks. (G-61 and G-63 of the *Correspondence*).

Sapru at one time had asked Gandhi very clearly that Gandhi should invite a convention to explore avenues for progress towards the solution of the deadlock and ask for the opinion of the convention but Gandhi in a letter dated November 17, 1944

MAINSTREAM

(G-71 of the *Correspondence*) had communicated that his name should not be used in public in connection with any conference.

It is further found that Sapru had forwarded a copy of a questionnaire to Gandhi and Gandhi had sent the answers to Sapru. It appears that Jinnah was playing with Gandhi who was under the magic charm of Mountbatten. Gandhi in a letter had mentioned: "I have no idea of what he meant for he never told me what he had in his mind." This letter also makes it clear that Gandhi and Jinnah could not come to an agreement on the Two-Nations theory of Jinnah. But Gandhi mentioned "Although I could not agree to the Two Nations Theory. I agreed on the basis of members of a family desiring severance of the family in matters of conflict but not in all matters so as to become enemies one of the other as if there was nothing common between the two except enmity." (Photostat S.N. 7570 in Gandhi Memorial Library, New Delhi).

Cabinet Mission

In a letter of June 5, 1946 Sapru expressed his fears regarding the Cabinet Mission Plan and about the grouping of the Provinces, internal customs and currency, communications, British troops in India etc.

Events were moving very fast at this time and Attlee and Pethick Lawrence made clear in March 1946 that India herself must choose what would be her future constitution. The Cabinet Mission composed of Stafford Cripps and others came to New Delhi on March 24, 1946 but Gandhi took an uncompromising attitude. By this time Nehru, Maulana Azad and Sardar Patel had clearly broken away from Gandhi and they were determined to cry a halt to the drift. Nehru had become the President of the Congress in place of Maulana Azad at Gandhi's intervention and Nehru at once declared that the Constituent Assembly would be a sovereign body in contrast to Gandhi's rather enigmatic statements: "I regard the Constituent Assembly as the substitute of

Satyagraha. It is constructive *Satyagraha*."

Nehru completely alienated the Muslim League and the parting of ways with Jinnah was complete. The Direct Action Day of August 16, 1946 followed and brought in a communal orgy of the worst manner. The effect of this orgy on Gandhi was tremendous and his tours to Noakhali and other affected places were an eye-opener for Gandhi. But this also brought Gandhi, peculiarly enough nearer to the partition and he completely gave in to the advice of Nehru and others. It was Maulana Azad who has mentioned that the first visit of Gandhi to Lord Mountbatten had completely changed Gandhi and Gandhi was sold to the partition idea. This meeting took place on March 31, 1947 and the magic cobweb of Mountbatten continued to imprison Gandhi till Partition was effected.

It has to be remembered that the partition plea was formally presented to the Indian leaders in a conference held by Lord Mountbatten on June 2, 1947. The plan was accepted and both Jinnah and Gandhi agreed to vivisection India. In the All-India Congress Working-Committee meeting on June 14, 1947 in Bombay, Gandhi asked the members not to oppose the resolution on Partition. This Gandhi did although he had confessed in the meeting: "I have not got the strength today or else I would declare rebellion single-handed."

Prayed to God

All this will show that it will certainly not be correct to say that Gandhi did not have anything direct to do with the partition of India.

It would rather be correct to say that just before partition actually took place Gandhi had started to repent his part in the move. On the morning of June 1, 1947, mistaking the hands of his watch, Gandhi woke up earlier than usual and we have it on record that before his prayer he was bemoaning lying in his bed. He found himself all alone and felt that even Sardar and Jawaharlal thought that his read-

ing of the political situation was wrong and peace was sure to return if Partition was agreed upon. Gandhi bemoaned that Partition could not be done after the British rule had ceased. He had prayed to God that He might not keep him alive to witness the price of the partition. But God had willed otherwise.

At the end, it should, however, be mentioned that there were some people who could foresee the effects of a very hurried partition that the political leaders had decided on. Strangely enough, they belonged to the clan of the British bureaucracy. Gen. Tuker who was in-charge of the Eastern Command had given a paper at the end of 1945 predicting as to what would happen if a sullen India clearly divided in two camps be kept together. He had also predicted as to what would happen if a hurried partition was effected. He had suggested that steps should be taken to make the division of the army and the civil service even surreptitiously "so as to be ready at the drop of a handkerchief in time when partition was decided upon."

But this paper was cold-stored by the Viceroy and Sir Claude Auchinleck, the Commander-in-Chief. Lord Mountbatten was keen on bringing in the partition as quickly as possible and he made no secret of his aim and that was to keep India and Pakistan as members of the Commonwealth. Even the date for the partition was fixed in India after the Viceroy had "enticed Nehru and his comrades into the Commonwealth with the carrot of immediate independence (Jinnah did not need to be enticed; he came willingly)" as Leonard Mosley has observed in his "*The Last Days of the British Raj*. The India Office was taken aback by the accelerated date but had to accede to Mountbatten to keep political peace in India. Every step was taken in a hurry and it cannot be denied that the lack of awareness of what might follow had much to do with the immediate after-effects of the Partition, and the authors behind the partition were either directly or indirectly responsible for these after-effects.

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LESSONS OF PRESS STRIKE

Sri Chitta Ranjan's article on the Press strike (*Mainstream*, Sept. 28) should be most welcome to those concerned with the future of the trade union movement in the newspaper industry. A tragic sense of disorientation and anti-climax is overcoming the movement in the wake of the strike which by all accounts was a disastrous failure.

Many working journalists like me who have no party affiliations cannot help the clammy feeling that among the reasons for the fiasco was the disruptive role of a certain section of the IFWJ's leadership. This section clearly subordinated the movement's interests to the compulsions of a certain political party's private drama of vengeance against another political party to which the President of the AINEF, Sri S. Y. Kolhatkar, happens to belong.

An overwhelmingly large section of the IFWJ's membership has no party affiliations and has believed that the organisation should be outside all political control. But a section of the leadership (which includes known card-holders of the CPI and "fellow-travellers") has tried to convert the IFWJ into an extended agit-prop wing of the party. This particular section of the leadership looked askance at the militancy of the AINEF's following and was not prepared to believe that there could be a prolonged strike. When the strike did come off and began getting into stride, the doubting Thomases of the IFWJ were so unnerved that they established clandestine

liaison with the Central Government and took upon themselves the role of strike-breakers. Their entire effort was to demoralise the AINEF leadership into surrendering to the employers' pressure and blackmail. This is not to suggest that the AINEF leadership's role was entirely above board. But to those who had a line on the goings-on the disruptive role of a section of the IFWJ leadership and its political chicanery which took the form of a smear campaign by whispering insiders of the CPI against Sri Kolhatkar was disgusting in the least. The commissars of the IFWJ might pride themselves on their tactical achievement, but pray, what of the movement as a whole?

Time has come for working journalists to think of action, end the CPI hegemony by proxy over the IFWJ. If the IFWJ cannot be taken out of the party's control, working journalists would be constrained to think of a new organisation. The rationale of having separate organisations for journalists and non-journalists is questionable. The need now is for a composite organisation in conformity with the principle of one union for one industry.

It would not add to the vanity of the IFWJ's petit-bourgeois leadership to be told that the IFWJ had no real *locus standi* in this strike. First, the journalists' wage board recommendations were statutory and the IFWJ was not very serious about the strike. Secondly, the strike, limited as it was to the first three classes of newspapers, really did

not involve journalists as evident from the tiny fraction of journalists in these papers who had the courage to declare they were on strike. In New Delhi, in the entire Times of India group only two journalists were on strike. In The Statesman New Delhi, only two journalists were on strike. The IFWJ did not represent the journalists of the strike-bound papers though it might have a following in papers not affected by the strike. The IFWJ's only interest in the strike, therefore, appears to have been limited to breaking it lest the CPI (M) claim credit for conducting a successful strike of the non-journalist employees.

As for the conduct of the strike, the AINEF leadership did not know that since the recommendations of the non-journalist employees wage board were defective, their case was weak. So the leadership was content to survive from one banal stance to another, inventing new arguments. When the Government wanted to issue an ordinance declaring the recommendations statutory, the AINEF leadership pleaded against it. For it was clear that if challenged by the employers in court, many of the recommendations might be struck down. This realisation dawned on the leadership rather late in the day.

It is well known that there was a stage when the employers were nervy at the prospect of an ordinance the moment Parliament's session adjourned. But came the stage when they realised that the IFWJ was out to scuttle the strike and there was

no unity of action between the two organisations and a tough line against the strike would pay off.

When the negotiations reached a stalemate and it was known that the employers' attitude was hardening thanks to Government's support, the AINEF leadership had begun to doubt the bonafides of the IFWJ leadership. The only course left was to extend the strike to cover all the newspapers and news agencies but the IFWJ could no longer be relied upon. Anything that em-

barrassed the "left of centre" Government was contrary to the party line of some of its leaders.

The superciliousness of the strike leadership would be clear from a simple fact. Many would recall that a few years ago when there was a printers' strike in the United Kingdom over wages, all the national papers except the Communist *Daily Worker* were closed down. The *Daily Worker* was the only paper to accept the union demands. And yet the union insisted on freezing the circulation of the paper as long

as the other papers remained closed due to strike. In New Delhi, two of the six English papers came under the exempted category (below Class III) in this strike. But there was no attempt to freeze their circulation. The papers raised their print orders by many times over their normal runs. Was there ethics to it—in resorting to such massive print orders, or for that matter in the unions allowing such a practice?

New Delhi

Mohan Ram

SRI CHITTA RANJAN REPLIES

I think that Sri Mohan Ram is entirely wrong in placing the whole blame for the failure of the recent press strike at the door of "a section of the IFWJ's leadership" which he plainly accuses of having acted on behalf of and in the interest of the CPI. The two persons who handled the IFWJ part of the strike are Sri V. N. Bhushan Rao, President, who has never had any political affiliation of any kind,

and Sri S. B. Kolpe, Secretary General, whose political views are totally different from those of the CPI. Even the role of these two leaders of the IFWJ was, as I had mentioned in my article, peripheral; they found themselves forced into a situation for which neither they nor the rank and file of the IFWJ had been prepared. They can be accused of lack of comprehension, inefficient functioning,

failure to assert themselves at every stage; but not of toeing the line of any particular political party. The same cannot be truthfully said of those who handled the AINEF end of the strike, which of course was the major part. In fact it has to be admitted that despite having been ignored or bypassed at crucial stages of decision-taking, the IFWJ leadership tried its best to stand firmly by the AINEF. On the other hand, the AINEF leadership, particularly Sri Kolhatkar, merely tried to make use of the influence of the journalists' organisation to apply pressure on those in authority. The strike was not looked upon as a joint struggle in which both parties had equal stake.

The working journalists, it is true, were not wholeheartedly in the strike in some of the establishments, although Sri Mohan Ram's figures are incorrect. This has to be seen in the light of the fact that the State-level leadership of the journalists was in the dark about what was happening and was in no position to mobilise the members on the basis of a clear programme of action. As a member of the executive committee of the Delhi Union of Journalists I know that the DUJ did not receive any instructions or guidance till after the strike had actually started on July 23.

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For this state of affairs I would blame the IFWJ leadership.

For the failure of the historic strike, however, the leadership of the AINEF must be squarely held guilty. The AINEF leadership was divided to such an extent that whispering campaigns by one group against the other went on vigorously almost throughout the strike period. Neither the Joint Action Council nor the working committee of the AINEF met to take stock of the situation even once during the whole two-month period. The president and secretary-general of the organisation were at loggerheads. Only three of the dozen members of the Joint Action Council were present in Delhi, and the Secretary-General formed the minority in this group. It is well known that at no stage of the so-called negotiations (there was actually little by way of direct talks between employers and employees) were the workers once taken into confidence about what was going on. The talks were all very hush-hush, and the AINEF leadership at different stages was said to have committed itself to various positions in writing. The

last of these commitments was the undertaking given by Sri Kolhatkar and Sri K. L. Kapur that they would accept adjudication if 75 percent of the difference between present emoluments and those due under the wage award was protected. Since it was known that the employers, having been given advance intimation of Government's plans, were only waiting for the adjudication order, it is not clear why the workers' leaders should have made any such commitment. All that it has helped to do is to enable Sri Hathi to claim that he had taken the step with the concurrence of the workers.

I have no doubt that but for the political equations based on differing loyalties within the AINEF leadership, the whole approach to the strike and its aims would have been clear and the workers would have won. If the AINEF found it impossible to extend the strike, it was certainly not because of the IFWJ's leadership; surely Sri Mohan Ram is overestimating IFWJ's capacity to organise a nationwide strike. The reason is simply that the AINEF

leadership, concerned with its own petty internal quarrels and jockeying for power, had failed to gear up its units for the purpose. After the way it was treated by the AINEF, the IFWJ leadership with all its faults would have been justified in openly denouncing the leadership of the AINEF. That it did not only demonstrated its loyalty to the cause of newspaper employees. But it is true that the IFWJ leadership which was in a position to exert influence on the course of events, failed to do so.

As for Sri Mohan Ram's view about "freezing" the circulation of the newspapers of the exempted classes which were coming out during the strike period, I shall content myself with pointing out that it is identical with the demand made by the employers' organisation, the IENS, which went to the extent of holding out threats to such newspapers for not abiding by its directive. In fairness Sri Mohan Ram should have taken note of the fact that these exempted newspapers had implemented the wage awards.

C. N. Chitta Ranjan

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Discussion

Discussion on the Czechoslovak crisis, reflecting different points of view, continue in Mainstream. This week further excerpts from the Report by Gus Hall, General Secretary of CP, USA, are published, together with a contribution from Dr Zafar Imam of Indian Council of World Affairs. Next week, Mainstream will carry contributions from Professor Susobhan Sarkar and others.

Czechoslovak Crisis—II

GUS HALL

PARTICULARLY alarming was the publication on June 27, of a '2,000 Word' statement that was issued by 70 intellectuals and which was carried in Literarni Listy (Prague) and in other Czechoslovak newspapers. It was also carried in radio and television. This article addressed to workers, peasants, office workers, scientists, artists and all citizens, was a platform of counter-revolution. Under cover of liberalisation it tried to wipe out the gains made since 1948, sought to discredit the Communist Party and its guiding role, and to undermine the fraternal relations of Czechoslovakia with its socialist allies.

The 2,000 Word, article proposed that the people make their own decisions employing such methods as demonstrations, strikes and boycotts in order to get rid of party cadres and personalities devoted to the socialist cause.

They demand the 'establishment of our own civil committees and commissions'—in short to take over power.

They pledged to act with arms in hand for the leadership which they would select. This was an appeal for an armed counter-revolution. This appeal contained much demagogic phrasing such as the need for communists in the government, but communists of a particular kind. Does this article not point up the danger from counter-revolution? It became the rallying point for all anti-socialist forces.

Let me read you some sentences from this appeal.

Describing the past of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia which had fought fascism and erected socialism it wrote:

'The Communist Party betrayed the great trust the people put in it after the war. It preferred the glories of office, until it had those and nothing more. The leadership of the party changed it from a political and ideological group into a power-hungry organisation, attracting egoists, cowards and crooks.'

Is this criticism? Or is this not the language of counter-revolution?

The statement then goes on attacking the ideas of socialism and the revolution of 1948. This is done in devious language but its meaning is clear for those who want to see. It stated:

'The process of revival is not producing anything new. Many of its ideas are older than the errors of socialism in our country. These errors (and this refers to the basic ideas of socialism—G.H.) should have been exposed long ago but they were suppressed... Their victory was decided by the weakness of the old leadership, aggravated by the accumulation of mistakes of 20 years of misrule. All the defects in the ideology of this system were nourished until they matured.'

In other words, in the opinion of these intellectuals, the mistakes made sprang from the very nature of the system of socialism

and came from misrule originating in 1948, when the workers took power. They called for wiping out the 20 years of socialism. Is this, or is this not counter-revolution?

The statement continues:

'The days immediately ahead of us will determine our future course for many years to come... Each of us will have to take the responsibility for drawing his own conclusions.'

But the document had already drawn the conclusion: 'Wipe out the 20 years of socialism!'

The statement then declares, 'We should support the progressive wing of the communists... The progressives are fighting for democracy—the conservatives are fighting to keep their cushy jobs.' 'Workers will help themselves if they elect trade-union representatives who are capable and honest, naturally leaders without regard to party membership...'

'Let us demand the resignation of those who have abused their power...'

'We must find ways to induce them to leave. Such steps include public criticism, resolutions, demonstrations, collecting funds for their retirement, strikes and boycotts...' Is this a programme of correcting weakness or is this a programme for confusion and disruption?

'Let us demand public meetings of national committees, and on questions which the officials refuse to consider, let us set up special citizens' committees and commissions to deal with the pro-

blems... 'Is this criticism or is this not anarchy?'

'Let us change the district and local press... or let us start new newspapers.'

'Let us establish committees for the defence of free speech...'

'Let us have marshals to maintain order at our meetings... Let us unmask informers.' 'Informers' for whom?

Now, let us understand this platform. This is being urged at a time when the process of democratisation has been under way.

Was this not a platform of counter-revolution? If it wasn't then what was it? A programme for development of socialism, perhaps? This was not just words. It became the real action programme. With demagogy, with terror, they were forcing honest people out of leadership positions in government and in trade unions.

The foreign press understood its significance. For example, Count Razumofsky in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* characterised it as 'the first beginning of a way to change the path away from Moscow'. He called, moreover, for a campaign to abolish the armed people's militia.

How did the leadership deal with this '2,000 Word' article of counter-revolution?

At first they did nothing. Only after pressure from the other socialist countries did the leadership denounce the statement as showing the heightening activities of the anti-socialist forces. But subsequently, in replying to the five-party letter, it again played down the threat stating that things were under control. It even published a statement by the authors of this counter-revolutionary appeal that they did not have in mind the undermining of the fundamentals of socialism in Czechoslovakia. The authors thanked Dubcek for such understanding treatment and they continued their business.

They acknowledged in their reply to the five-party letter and I quote: 'These are now in progress in Czechoslovakia campaigns and ungrounded instigations against individuals, executives and public figures, the members of the new leadership included...' But again they did nothing. In fact, a veteran general who attacked the '2,000 Words' in the Assembly became the victim of an attack. He had no defenders.

After Bratislava, the activities of the counter-revolutionary forces did not cease. In desperation they became more aggressive. The public meetings critical of the leadership grew; demonstrations against the leadership grew; the campaign in the factories against those sympathetic to the Bratislava agreement grew; the signers of a letter were called 'traitors' and persecuted. Petitions were being circulated for the abolition of the people's militia.

The Presidium of the Central Committee criticised these actions, but beyond that, they did nothing. The press leadership was not changed. No real rebuff was being given to the counter-revolutionary forces.

What was developing in Czechoslovakia was a creeping paralysis of leadership and creeping counter-revolution.

The leadership had shown itself too weak, too indecisive in a situation demanding resolute action to protect the gains of the past and to develop the programme of democracy and socialism.

This is the fact of the matter.

(To Be Continued)

A Triumph for Ideology?

ZAFAR IMAM

To condemn outright or to support unequivocally the action of the Soviet Union and its allies in Czechoslovakia would throw little light on the sequence of events which led to the unhappy state of affairs in that country. The purpose of this contribution to the discussion is to focus attention on the facts of this tragic situation as best as possible and to understand them as they emerge.

So far facts are available to us from three main sources: the Soviets and their allies, the Czechs, and the Western news media.

The Soviets and their allies

have now come out with substantial and concrete facts about the reasons for their intervention in Czechoslovakia. Firstly, they have shown that there developed a real threat to the socialist system in Czechoslovakia; evidence provided are the resurrection of the old Social-Democratic Party of Czechoslovakia, the anti-Socialist activities of the various clubs and centres mainly organized by the intellectuals and known anti-Communists, and an openly hostile propaganda of the Czech news media against the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries and against the Czech Communist Party it-

self—all of them sought to achieve, to quote the words of *Pravda* editorial, "a quiet takeover of power without armed conflict." Secondly, there were serious trends in some responsible quarters in Czechoslovakia to take the country out of the Warsaw Pact: Two main evidence are crucial here; the one is the public statement of the then Czech Foreign Minister made in June clearly hinting at the possibility of Czechoslovakia becoming neutral, and the other is the mass of informations collected by the electronic listening devices left behind secretly in the Czech territory by the withdrawing

Soviet army after the joint manoeuvre of the Warsaw pact countries. Finally, the Czech Communist Party leaders in spite of numerous appeals and warnings from and joint meetings and collective discussions with the fraternal Communist Parties failed to take any step against the anti-Socialist forces whose resurrection they themselves had admitted; on the contrary, they abetted in the victimization and in laying off the old and tried party members from the Party, Government, People's Militia and the army.

The Czech version of the events in Czechoslovakia is more confused and contradictory because it has come from various sources. Besides, the official radio and press under the control of the Russians, there were a number of clandestine radio stations claiming to be the voice of Free Czechoslovakia. All these sources have naturally put out different versions of the events, but certain common features in their versions do emerge: by these, firstly, nobody worth his grain in Czechoslovakia ever asked for intervention from the Soviets and their allies; the Soviet and allied armies entered into Czechoslovakia without prior information to the Czechoslovakian Government and Party. Secondly, these versions make out, there has been almost a complete unanimity in opposing the Soviets and allied intervention, though it appears that the workers by and large did not take active part in demonstrations and passive resistance against the foreign army. Thirdly, the Soviets did use pressure during the Moscow talks between the Czech and Soviet leaders and the Czech leadership could find no way out other than accepting minimum demands put forward by the Soviets and their allies. Finally, the Soviet and the allied armed forces certainly did not behave like an occupying army and there was indeed a marked restraint in indulging in violence and strong-armed methods in spite of serious provocations; undoubtedly this was possible because of the realism and far-

sightedness shown by the Czech leaders in asking their countrymen to remain calm and reasonable. This is the Czech version.

The Western news media marshalled all its technical and financial resources in providing a wide coverage of the Czech events. Cutting out the dramatics and anti-Soviet emotional involvement, the Western news media mainly relayed and reproduced the broadcasts of free Czech Radio.

All these various sources of information lead us to two basic questions of which we must seek viable answers, if we really want to assess the Czech crisis.

The first is related to the ideology, the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, in which the Soviet camp professes to believe. Right from the very beginning of the Communist movement, it has been its theory and practice that every Communist Party has an international duty to reform. By international duty it was meant that there must be a community of interests among all the Communist Parties of the world and among all the Socialist countries. During the period when Communist International and the Cominform were active, the community of interests was focused through the compulsions and approach of the Soviet Communist Party. Later, in the post-Stalin period, the emphasis gradually shifted to individual Communist Parties and each socialist country. This was a process which, on the one hand, led to the ideological recognition of the principles of independence and non-interference in each other's affairs and, on the other, it also precipitated the schisms and rifts among the Socialist countries. But in spite of this development, it was always understood that the Community of interests among the Socialist countries and among the Communist Parties of the world need not and must not come into conflict with the national interests of each one of them. The term national interests has always been given a characteristic ideological interpretation; that is, national interests become truly national when they serve the interests of the

working people in each country concerned and when they are in harmony and integrated with the community interests of all the Socialist countries and of all the Communist Parties of the world.

In the Czech crisis, the real ideological issue involved was this traditional concept of the community of interests among those socialist countries, which are found in the Soviet orbit. As a matter of fact, the principle of non-interference in each other's internal affairs was never in dispute as it was already conceded by the Soviets and their allies when they signified their approval of the liberalization programme of the Czech Communist Party after the ouster of Novotny. So much so that even after their armies moved into Czechoslovakia, as the recent Moscow communique after the Soviet-Czech talks showed, the Soviets and their allies reiterated their support for the decisions of the January Plenum of the Central Committee of the Czech Communist Party.

But in the Czech crisis this ideological sanction, which in different circumstances (as for example, during the Hungarian uprising of 1956) would have been much clearer, has got blurred. The entirely new element in the Czech crisis has been the fact that the local Communist Party neither asked for Soviet help nor completely denied the resurgence of those forces in the country which had clearly become alienated from it. However, the Czech Party felt confident in its own strength and ability to implement fully the decisions of the January Plenum and to reintegrate the alienated elements into the socialist system of the country. On the other hand, the Soviets and their allies gradually lost confidence in the claims and promises of the Czech leadership, and they finally came to the conclusion that their military presence in Czechoslovakia was the only way out for forcing the issue of the desired implementation of the decisions agreed to by the leadership of the Czech Communist Party at the joint meetings at Cierna and Bratislava.

Thus, we find that even the

concept of the community of interests among the socialist nations was not the main issue. The real issue was, who is supposed to put into practice this principle. The obvious answer would normally be the local Communist Party. But this answer certainly does not fully fit in the sequence of events in Czechoslovakia. Mainly because of the fact that the Czech Communist Party, apparently in the eyes of other fraternal Communist Parties of the region, overestimated its ability to implement its accepted programme, and this in turn led to the added strength of the anti-Socialist forces. In an unprecedented situation like this, one has to weigh very carefully whether the community of interests of all socialist nations still remain as important today as earlier for safeguarding the gains of the working people all over the world, since the October Revolution. If it is as important, the logical practical solution must follow, that is to say, the Socialist countries must use force with or without the consent of the local Communist Party only to avert this danger. But if it is no longer all that important, a Communist Party must be allowed to choose its course in complete freedom; and, in this case, the risk of using force even for the limited purposes, stated earlier, is too great to be considered seriously.

As it is, the Soviet, Hungarian, Polish, Bulgarian and East German Communist Parties opted for the first course of action. Even here, a question may be raised that at what stage, force must be used; when the anti-Socialist forces are in the process of creating a situation where the working people might lose power, or when the counter-revolution has already begun, as for example in Hungary in 1956. Then the Hungarian experience had shown that to wait for the counter-revolutionary elements to start a civil war before using force did cost heavily in men and material. Besides, in August 1968, there was no Suez war of 1956 to paralyze the West. Hence the choice was made for intervention here and now. And

it is precisely at this stage where we must leave ideology and consider the second question, namely the validity of attaching traditional importance to the community of interests among all socialist nations on the basis of geo-political factors.

Collective defence against external threat to these nations is clearly laid down in the provisions of the Warsaw Pact, while multilateral or unilateral action even against internal threat to the socialist system of every member of the Warsaw Pact is also implied in them. So much so that it would not be rash to suggest that notwithstanding the present state of hostility and bitterness in the Sino-Soviet relations, both China and the Soviet Union are still, and will remain committed to come to each other's help, if there develops the real danger of one being *wiped out* or *defeated* by a powerful enemy.

Even the remotest possibility of Czechoslovakia getting out of the Warsaw Pact and declaring its neutrality on the pattern of Austria, would have created serious problems for the security and safety of the Soviet Union and other active members of the Warsaw Pact. Firstly, the southwestern flank of the Soviet Union would have been exposed to NATO members, particularly West Germany; this would certainly mean additional burden on the Soviet Union.

Secondly, there was no real guarantee that other loyal members of the Warsaw Pact would not after all convince themselves, like the Rumanians and then the Czechs, that the NATO (and West Germany in particular is no longer a military threat to them, and thus accelerate the process of disintegration of the Warsaw Pact; after Rumania, it appeared fatal to the Soviet Union and its allies to risk another Rumania.

Finally, the institutionalised balance of terror in Europe would have been definitively tilted against the Soviet Union and its allies.

All these problems, which appear crucial behind Soviet and allied action in Czechoslovakia, raise certain questions about

the level of Soviet armed might and strategic planning.

If the Soviet defence and strategy are based on nuclear defensive offensive capacity, and if they have achieved a dynamic optimum level of deployment, close and integrated links with Czechoslovakia or any other East European country should no longer be vital to the Soviet Union. But if we start with the other presumption, that is to say, the Soviet nuclear defensive-offensive capacity has yet to reach a dynamic optimum level, Czechoslovakia and other East European countries do still retain their traditional strategic importance to the Soviet Union.

However, only on the basis of the Soviet action in Czechoslovakia, it would be rash to have a definitive view on Soviet defensive offensive capacity and strategy. Because we must also bear in mind that nuclear balance of terror has its own logic of both creating the possibility of rearguard non-military action by the nuclear powers in sensitive world spots and also of increasing the probability of nuclear collision if the sensitive world spots shift too close physically to any nuclear power. A neutral or a non-member Warsaw Pact Czechoslovakia would have certainly worried the Soviet Union on these two scores as well. Yet it can be safe guess that the Czech crisis is bound to raise eyebrows on the credibility of Soviet nuclear defensive-offensive capacity.

It is mainly because of such an uncertainty over the geo-political aspect of the Czech crisis that its ideological aspect assumes added significance. The Czech crisis thus must not be dismissed cynically as the familiar old game of 'Might is Right'. On the contrary, the Czech crisis has once again spotlighted the fact that the internal and external policies of the Soviet Union derive some ideological sanctions and the Soviet Union has not been entirely de-ideologised. Whether we support or condemn the Soviet and allied action in Czechoslovakia, the events in that country should wake us all from mythical dreams.

KERALA: HOME MINISTRY'S ALLERGY

(Continued from Page 8)

the Constitution whereby the Centre can intervene in a State in the event of its refusal to comply with Central directives under Articles 256 and 257.

*

The Home Ministry now seems to realise its helplessness in this matter and in spite of the strongman posture it has assumed it is now on the defensive. But the question still remains as to why in the initial stages it had adopted such a tough attitude and created a near crisis situation. For quite some time a powerful section of opinion in the Home Ministry has held that sooner rather than later some excuse should be found to sack the Kerala Government. This section feels that if the Kerala Government is allowed to continue for the full term of five years the State would be permanently lost to the Communists. It hoped that the Kerala Government might fall as a result of internal strains, but this hope has been belied. It is known that defections cannot change the political alignments in the State to the extent of bringing about the fall of the Government. It was informed that one of the constituents of the United Front, the Muslim League, would not be willing to toe the Chief Minister's line on the issue of dealing with the Central staff strike and if sufficient pressure was put on the State Government by the Centre the coalition might break up and the Government go down, the Home Ministry was working on this premise when it sought the Cabinet Committee's approval for issuing a directive.

Simultaneously, it had begun to work up pressure on the "doves" inside the Cabinet like Prime Minister, Sardar Swaran Singh, Sri Jagjivan Ram, Sri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmad and Sri Dinesh Singh who are believed to be against the tough line in dealing with the Kerala Government. As part of this pressure,

the Home Ministry managed to get SOS from heads of Central establishments in Kerala suggesting that the State Government would not give them adequate protection during the strike and asking for Central help. In response to these SOS, the Central Reserve Police units stationed in Kerala were alerted and put at the disposal of the Central establishments in the States. It is doubtful whether the sanction of the Cabinet's Internal Affairs Committee was taken for deployment of the CRP although this involved an open encroachment on the rights of the State Government. Whatever the law under which the CRP has been created, the CRP cannot do anything in regard to maintenance of law and order within the jurisdiction of any State unless the State Government itself directs the CRP authorities to do so; even the Army cannot take on itself, nor can it be asked by the Centre to do anything in a State in regard to law and order unless the State Government seeks its help. Yet, the CRP was commissioned, bypassing the State Government, and now an attempt is being made to justify this by reference to the powers of the CRP under the law. It has been pointed out to the Home Ministry that any law which violates the State's sole right under the Constitution to maintain law and order would be deemed *ultra vires*. The Home Ministry is now seeking legal advice and the Law Ministry has been asked to consult the Attorney General and other legal experts with regard to the CRP's powers *vis-a-vis* the States' responsibility for law and order.

*

Thus the Home Ministry's strongmanship has landed it in a jam. The controversy between the Centre and Kerala has wider implications also, parti-

cularly with regard to Centre-State relations and the Constitutional rights of the States. Even Congress administered States have always been very jealous of their rights and if the Centre's attempts to encroach on them continue the Kerala Government can mobilise their support as well. The process of encroachment on the rights of the States began soon after the Fourth General Election and if it continues it might lead to a serious crisis in Centre-State relations. Since the Centre always tries to justify its actions by putting new interpretations to Constitutional provisions and invoking some vague provisions of the Constitution it may become increasingly difficult for the Congress to resist the demand for another Constituent Assembly to revise the Constitution.

But at this moment it will suffice to point out that despite the realisation that its move to dislodge the Kerala Government has failed on this occasion, it intends to work up another situation in which it plans to proceed against Sri Namboodripad's Ministry. Those in the know say that the next move in this direction should be expected after the mid-term polls in West Bengal, Bihar, UP and Punjab. It is significant that the argument which restrained the Home Ministry on this occasion was that the dismissal of the Kerala Government would mean sure defeat for the Congress in the mid-term polls. In the meantime, the efforts to build a case against and intensify pressures on Kerala Government is continuing. Governor, Viswanathan who was Home Secretary for long, and his friends in the Ministry, the so-called Kerala hands, are anxious to do all they can in this regard. The Home Ministry seems to think that it has only lost the battle, not the war itself.

September 29

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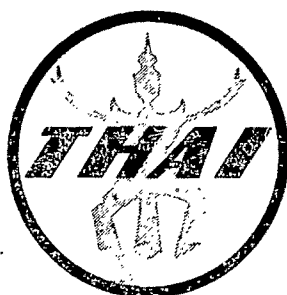
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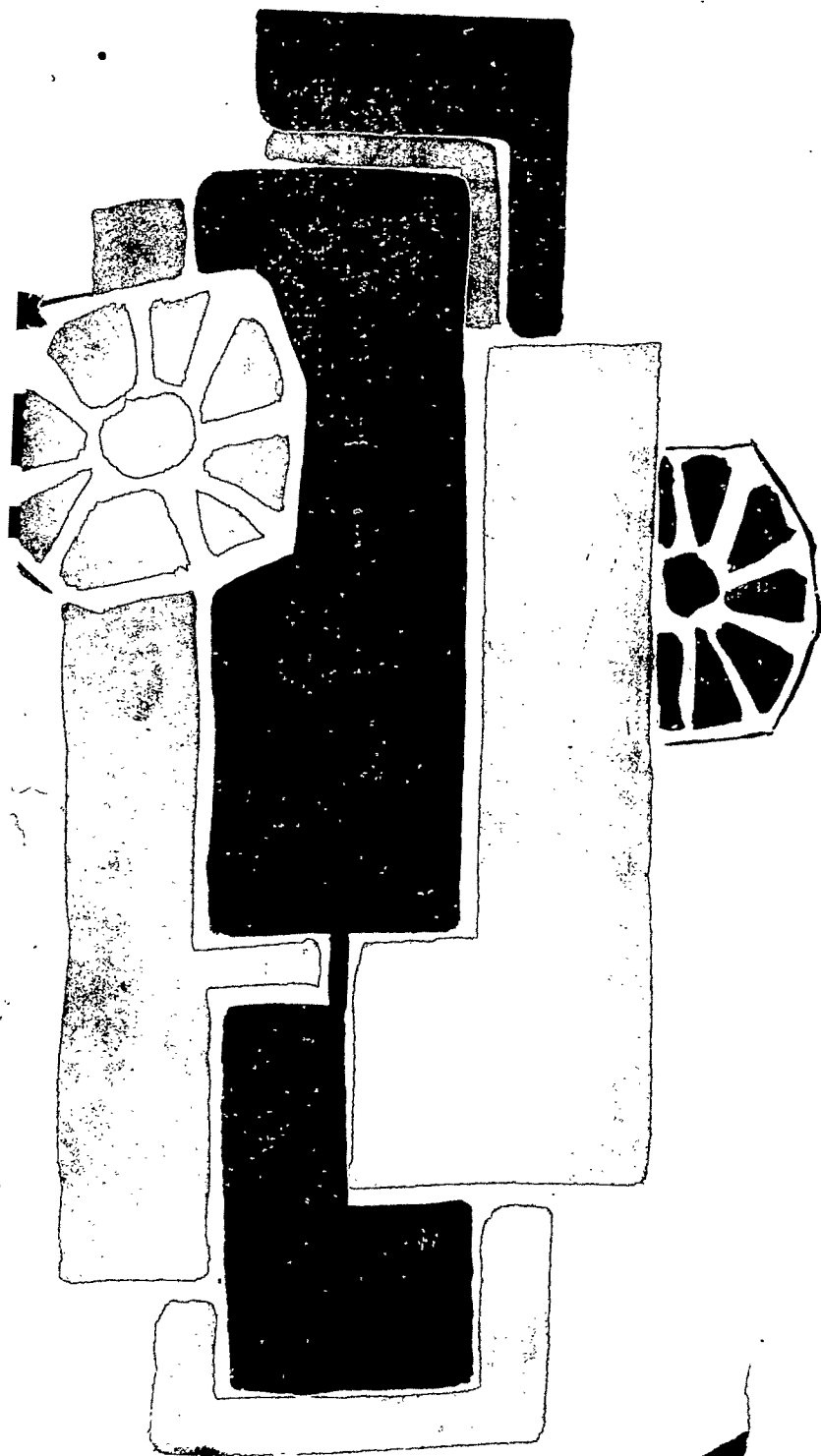
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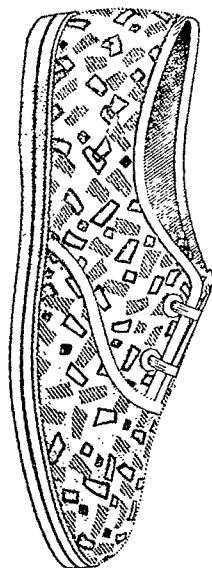
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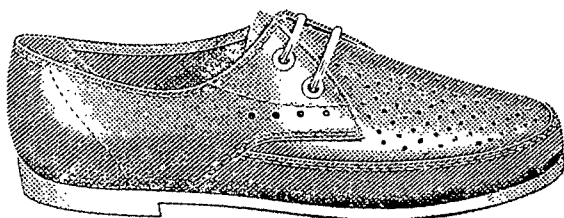
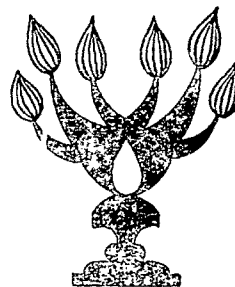
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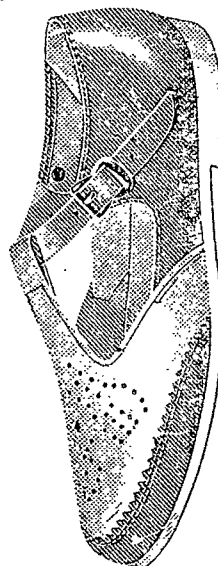
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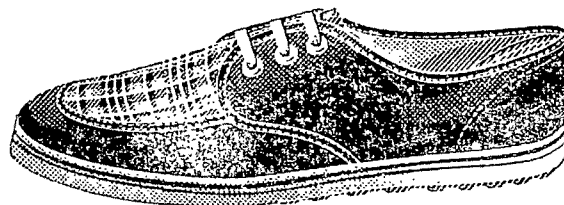
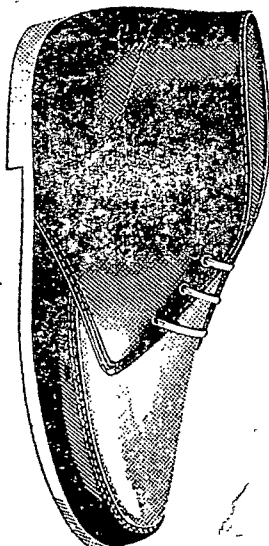
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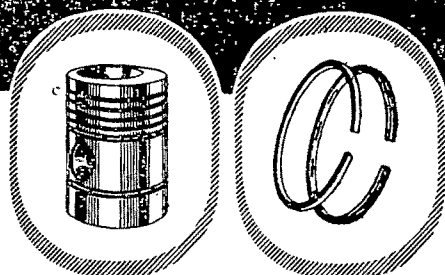
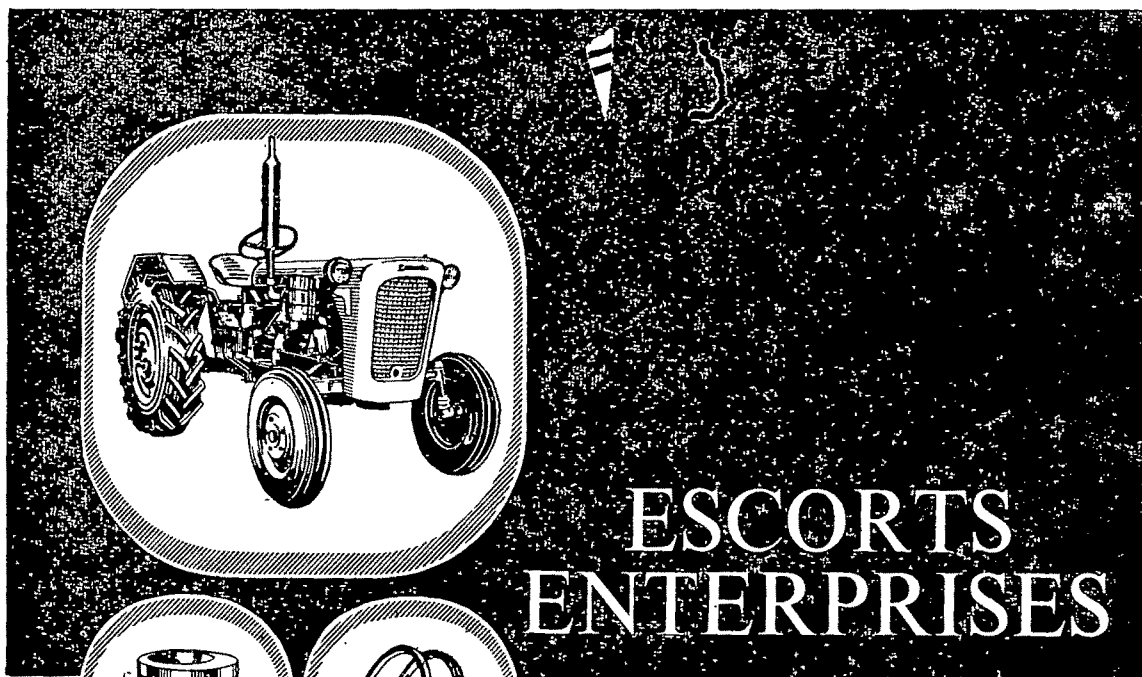
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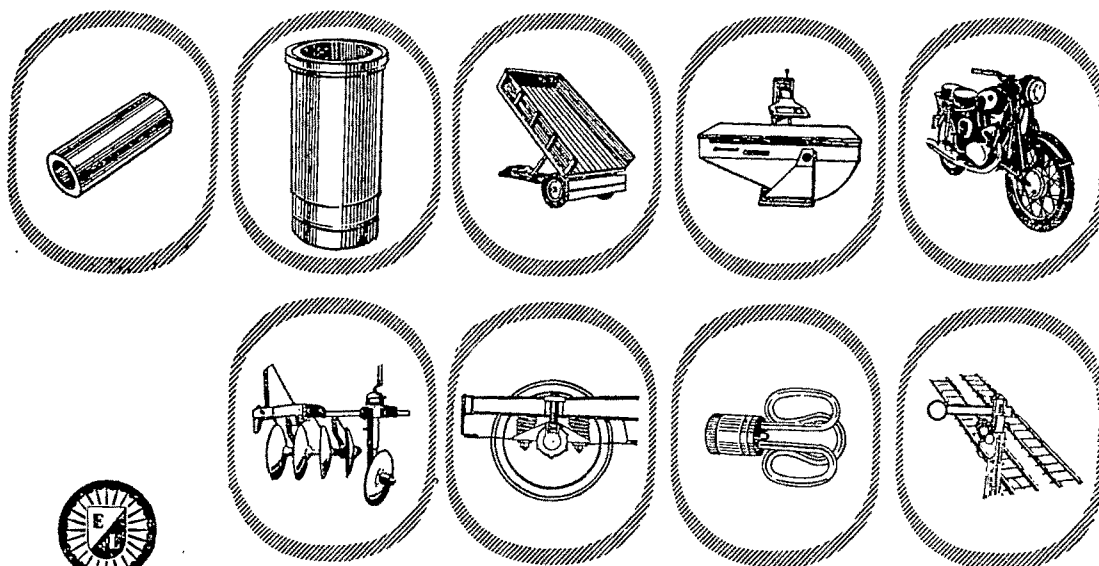


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dep 06/303

ROAD TO SELF-RELIANCE

THE return from abroad this week of two keymen in charge of the Government's economic affairs should provide ample material for assessing the climate for foreign assistance and formulating the development strategy for the immediate future.

The Deputy Prime Minister's experience in Washington and that of the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission in Moscow should be pieced together to get a clear view of the aid position, and an objective appraisal of the prospects may help the Government to avoid a lopsided approach to pressing economic issues and get over long-nurtured illusions that radical measures at home can be bypassed by injecting massive doses of foreign aid into the economy.

Despite the brave face he has been putting up, Sri Morarji Desai can hardly conceal the acute disappointment he has had to face during his confabulations in Washington. The new McNamara strategy has made it clear that in the immediate future, there is going to be a significant diversion of dollar aid from this part of the world to new pastures where the USA may hope to extend its political influence. Sri Desai's lamentation before World Bank-IMF annual meeting about IDA's second replenishment not turning up "even 15 months after the termination of the period for which the first replenishment was intended", seems to have had little impact on Wall Street money-lenders. Sri Desai, in the classical posture of a supplicant, did not forget to extol foreign aid having played "a valuable part in the progress we have made in agriculture and industry, technical education and health, and in building the infrastructure of power, transport and communica-

tions". But all this hardly moved the Shylocks.

Against this background, Sri Desai seemed to have tried to make a virtue out of necessity when he told a Washington club that he would not want the country to be "perpetually dependent" on foreign

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aid. Side by side, another spate of platitudes about self-reliance can be heard in official circles.

What is noteworthy in this ballyboo is that even political charlatans like Sri Asoka Mehta have suddenly become vociferous. His latest outburst at the Indian School of International Studies about "defection from development" being brought about by reliance on super-powers is both amusing and ominous. Coming from a man who more than anyone else, acted as the conduit of Washington to bring about devaluation of the rupee, and till his last day in the Government strove tirelessly to help US capital make further inroads into vital sectors of the economy, such as oil and petro-chemical industries, this talk of self-reliance has little meaning except to indicate that what Sri Asoka Mehta really has in mind is to disrupt this country's economic relations with the Socialist world, practically the only source from which India has got substantial wherewithal to achieve economic independence overcoming relics of colonial backwardness. Under cover of pompous talk of extending the area of non-alignment, the strategy advocated by men like Sri Mehta is to let the Indian economy stagnate and decline in its present chaotic state, and thereby become a helpless prey to big business pressures, both indigenous and foreign.

Viewed in this context, the significance of Sri D. R. Gadgil's recent explorings in Moscow cannot be missed. Already he has disclosed Soviet interest to help in the vital sectors of fertilizer and petro-chemicals, as also its readiness to absorb Indian fabrications in the joint projects now being set up with Soviet collaboration. Ever since Kosygin's offer during his visit to this country in January, to buy Indian manufactured goods like railway wagons and Bhilai-made steel, the possibility of strengthening Indo-Soviet economic cooperation has scared the pro-West lobby in this country and hence the campaign launched against it by the entire galaxy of unworthies from Sri S. K. Patil to Sri Asoka Mehta. The political overtones of the persistent campaign not only against the wagon deal but against the proposal for purchase of Soviet aircraft have been unmistakable.

The offer of Soviet assistance is not confined to sale and purchase of much-needed goods or only to the setting up of plants in key sectors. Equally important is the Soviet readiness to help in toning up public-sector projects set up with its help. This is clear from the helpful response that Sri K. D.

Malaviya has received in Moscow in his efforts to put the Heavy Engineering Corporation on its feet. For, with it is involved the prospect of real self-reliance—the gearing up of a project which on its own can directly help the expansion of industrialisation in this country.

The road to self-reliance is certainly not strewn with roses. It is not merely aid from the Socialist world that can ensure it. The internal concomitant of a policy of self-reliance demands a determined drive against indigenous vested interests, foolproof curbs on anti-social elements cornering a good portion of national wealth and resolute measures of nationalisation of key items in the economy together with purposeful running of the public sector itself. On all these counts, one has to note that the very elements in public life that are campaigning against strengthening economic ties with the Socialist world have been most active in trying to sabotage radical economic reforms at home. Spotting the enemy's agent has become equally necessary in the battle for economic independence as it was in the struggle for political freedom.

During her current tour of Latin America, Smt Indira Gandhi correctly said in Brazil: "We looked for help to achieve true economic freedom. But our people are now asking questions: Is the present pattern of aid being regarded as repayable charity or perhaps an investment for political support? We are chary of these new bonds which might increase our dependence on dominant economies." And, according to Smt Gandhi, the answer to all this is "a global strategy of development and an integrated programme of international cooperation."

What is missing in these noble sentiments is the need to discern between patterns of aid. For countries whose economies were ruined for centuries by imperialist exploitation, the urgency of building self-reliant economies demands large-scale industrialisation under strict social control, for without it, there could be no means of liquidating the economic impoverishment of the masses. And in this task, the people in the newly-independent countries, stretching from Algeria to Cambodia, from Afghanistan to Malaysia, are beginning to discriminate between the neo-colonialist tentacles of Western aid and the nation-building aspects of Socialist assistance. No plan of economic development for our country, whether short-term or long-range, can be effectively undertaken without guarding against one, and the maximum utilization of the other.

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REACTION'S NEW GAMBIT

THE Swatantra Party was born because Sri C. Rajagopalachari decided that rural and urban vested interests needed to be protected against the forces of change which in the late fifties were beginning to be felt in India's political life. Because of the renowned auspices under which the party was floated a number of frustrated individuals and reactionary groups backed by feudal elements and big money in general made a beeline for it, in the hope that what had been denied them elsewhere could be obtained through the instrumentality of the new party of the rich.

The individuals so assembled to give Swatantra the appearance of a national party never had any following; nor did they have clear ideas about any common economic or social aims. Some went into it because of anger with the Congress and in the expectation that it would put them on the road to power, while others joined it in the belief that private interests had at last found a dependable protector. It was natural that the feudal elements belonging to some of the former princely states should have decided to strengthen it.

But despite all the publicity given to it by the big business press and the funds made available for propaganda by feudal and other reactionary interests, it has not made much headway for the simple reason that the Swatantra Party has no roots among the people. Whatever

their disenchantment with the Congress or any of the other parties, the people realise fully that the Swatantra Party does not by any means stand for their interests. If nevertheless it has managed to secure a few seats in Parliament and in some of the Assemblies, it is partly because of the local influence of former princes in some pockets and partly due to the willingness of the more influential non-Congress parties to enter into electoral arrangements with the Swatantra among others in order to ensure the defeat of the Congress Party.

It is not surprising in these circumstances that within a decade of its formation with much fanfare the party should be showing unmistakable signs of cracking up. It has been rightly pointed out that it is a party of leaders without followers. And even these "leaders" have been thrown together due to various factors; they have little in common in the way of socio-economic aims or political philosophy, despite Sri C. Rajagopalachari's heroic efforts to create the impression that the party indeed has some kind of ideology. Its whole basis is a range of unhealthy negatives, from anti-Congressism to anti-Communism. The recent convention at Bhubaneswar shows that the party's leaders have begun to be aware that a totally negative approach to the problems of the people is taking it nowhere, and that without any ideas that can appeal to the masses it has no chance

of surviving to carry out its main purpose of safeguarding the interests of big capital and the landed aristocracy.

It is thus that the Swatantra Party has come to adopt a resolution favouring security of tenure for the tenant and the share-cropper, leading to proprietary right on payment of "just and fair" compensation to the landowners. Thus has it come to talk eloquently of a statutory minimum wage for farm labour and provision of "reasonable living conditions," and of assistance to rural co-operatives.

The resolutions adopted at Bhubaneswar clearly indicate that the party is making a frantic attempt to present itself as a party of liberalism; they also show that the party is incapable of taking a forthright stand on any of these issues affecting the common people because of its very composition and the kind of forces on whose moral and material support it depends for its existence. Even Sri Rajagopalachari's sudden concern for Central Government employees and his defence of their demand for a need-based minimum wage are part of the new effort to give the impression that the party is not one of total reaction.

However, all these attempts are foredoomed to failure because a party is not judged by the resolutions it adopts at conventions but by the capacity of its leaders to carry conviction with the people by active and untiring

work among them. Of this the Swatantra Party is incapable by reason of its very composition. It has quite a number of leaders and little by way of followers, and even the handful of persons with some kind of political background have been pushed into the backseats to make way for ex-bureaucrats and more reliable agents of feudal interests. It is symbolic of the party's situation that Sri Dandekar is on top while Sri Masani is sulking.

All the pious sentiments about the tiller, the minimum wage and the Central Government employees, however, could not hide the fact that the convention had been summoned for certain specific purposes. The first of these was to devise ways to prevent the threatened disintegration of the party. The Masani group has suffered heavy reverses; Sri Dandekar's compliments to Sri Masani as the man who spoke with the greatest conviction on party principles cannot wipe out the fact that Sri Masani is today a totally disillusioned man whose dreams of becoming a force in national politics with the backing of the princes and other moneybags have been rudely shattered by the ICS invasion of the Swatantra Party. Sri Ranga is content with making strong speeches so long as his importance is not questioned. Sri Rajagopalachari's main interest is to keep up a tirade against the Congress and for this purpose he continues to be useful in keeping the warring elements within the party together.

The second purpose of the convention was to mount an attack on the Government's foreign policy and pursue the Swatantra Party's line of pushing this country into the Western camp. The support extended by the convention to the Singapore Premier's plea for mutual security arrangements in South-East Asia provides clear evidence of what the party is after. It is no secret that the Swatantra Party is a pro-American organisation committed to rabid anti-Communism. If Swatantra stalwarts think that the "power vacuum" in South-East Asia to be created by projected British withdrawal in three

years needs to be filled, it is by an India which will be a satellite of the Western Powers.

The resolution demanding the manufacture of nuclear weapons in India was withdrawn not because the party's leaders believe in the philosophy of non-proliferation but because the USA and Britain do not want new nations to enter the Nuclear Club. It was necessary, further, that a propaganda offensive should be launched against India's close, friendly and fruitful ties with the Soviet Union particularly and the socialist nations generally.

The Bhubaneswar convention has only provided additional proof that there is really no need for the Swatantra Party except to bolster the ego of certain individuals now dominant in it. Sri Dandekar has admitted that the party has no cadres; his proposal that funds should be collected from ordinary people in small amounts reads like a pathetic parody of the proposal made by Sri Kamaraj at the Bhubaneswar Congress, with the difference that the Congress Party had enough organization at the grass roots to put the plan into operation if it so willed. Sri Dandekar's mournful admissions contrast sharply with Sri Rajagopalachari's facetious remark that "whatever might happen to our leaders, the party will not break down." What he meant perhaps was that a handful of feudal, pro-West and anti-Communist elements could always be got together to keep the party going. It can perhaps be kept alive as a party of leaders without followers, though it is difficult to see what except personal vanity is satisfied thereby: maybe the interests at home and abroad which in the first place desired the formation of the party would like it to be there for their own purposes.

The Swatantra Party's bosses are well aware that the party has no future in this country; hence the revival of the "national government" slogan in a new form. It is obviously the hope of the party's leaders, whose conviction about their own intellectual eminence and administrative competence is unsurpassed, that

if a Right-wing combination can somehow be brought to power at the Centre, they can all get comfortably on to the bandwagon and rule the country on lines suitable to their patrons within and outside India. They harp on "talent" because they are entirely convinced that they possess a monopoly of this rare commodity. They are uncomfortably aware no doubt of possible competition from other equally reactionary quarters. But competition may be changed into peaceful coexistence; at least this would seem to be the hope behind Sri Ranga's warm praise for the communal RSS on the eve of the Bhubaneswar convention.

The reactionary line which the Swatantra Party advocates has staunch adherents in the Congress Party itself, and there are also parties like the Jana Sangh whose economic and political aims are not very different from those of the Swatantra. This is only one of the reasons why the Swatantra Party has no future in this country. Another, and much more important, is that it can never gain the confidence or affection of the common people who are well aware that what is needed to ensure a decent future for themselves and their children and national self-respect for the country as a whole is the demolition of rural and urban vested interests within India and the destruction of the hold of foreign monopoly capital on the Indian economy. They cannot afford to encourage a party whose sole purpose is to maintain and strengthen these against the basic interests of the people. Whatever vote-catching slogans the Swatantra "leaders" may coin for purely opportunistic reasons, the people know that it is an anti-people party and will continue to reject it firmly. It is important for the Leftist parties not to go against the interests of the common people by agreeing even to temporary arrangements for electoral gains with this party of reaction, thus giving it a semblance of democratic respectability.

October 8 —C. N. Chitta Ranjan

Lessons of Central Government Employees' Strike

MADHU LIMAYE

THE Central Government is undoubtedly the biggest single employer in this country. According to the census of the Central Government employees conducted in 1965, the total number of regular employees in the Central Government service was 24,19,653, of which by far the largest number, that is 13,14,907 was employed by the Railways. This constitutes over 54.3 per cent of the total strength of the Central Government employees. Next in importance come the civilian employees under the Ministry of Defence. There are 4,32,096 employees under the Defence Department constituting over 17.8 per cent of the total Central Government labour force. The third largest group comprises of the employees of Post and Telegraph Department that is, 12 per cent of the total number of Central Government employees. All other Ministries put together only employ 16 per cent of the total Government staff.

According to the 1965 census, the entire strength of the Central Government employees was divided between Class III and Class IV posts in approximately equal proportion. Only two per cent of the regular staff were in Class I and Class II. During the Third Plan period and subsequently there has been a pronounced trend towards rapid increase in the number of gazetted officers as against the non-gazetted persons! This is part of the evil process of bureaucratisation of our administration.

Nearly 55 per cent of the

Central Government employees draw a basic pay of less than Rs 100 per month. Another 35 per cent of the employees have a basic pay ranging between Rs 100 and Rs 200 per month. It is this big class of employees that is really bearing the brunt of the continuous rise in prices of essential commodities during and after the war and has been a victim of steady erosion of its purchasing power. This class of employees has not seen any upward revision of their wages in the last 20 years, although in the same period wages in the organised sector in private industry have recorded a significant improvement. This wage rise has been especially impressive in modern petroleum, chemical, pharmaceutical, engineering and metal working industries.

The demand for a need-based minimum wage, the merger of dearness allowance into the basic pay structure and full neutralisation of the rise in the cost of living are not only relevant demands but are absolutely essential for this vast number of Central Government employees.

After the failure of the 1960 strike by the Central Government employees large-scale victimisation and withdrawal of recognition of Central Government employees' trade unions, no effort was made by the Union leaders to re-organize their Unions on a sound footing. The leadership did not establish a rapport with their membership nor did they undertake any programmes which were likely to enthuse the employees. The approach and

policies of the leadership were so insipid, unimaginative and lacklustre that a feeling of confidence and trust could not grow among these employees. Barring a few well-organized sectors like the employees in the office of A.G. and C. and Postal Department, most other employees' unions and associations remained anaemic. Especially pathetic was the condition of the railway unions and their federations. While the INTUC's NFIR was being propped up by the Railway Board, the condition of AIRF was no better. The trade union activities of the leadership consisted of summit politics and manoeuvre, acquisition of air-conditioned passes and membership of various Government committees. No work was done at the grass roots level nor were any militant elements permitted, let alone encouraged, to work in the railway unions. The organizations led by the militants were refused affiliation by the AIRF leadership. The Government, too, on its part very much liked to deal with an ineffective trade union leadership without a strong mandate from the employees. Such a leadership the Government could always dominate and dictate terms to.

It was during the term of Sri G. L. Nanda as Home Minister that an attempt was made to find a solution to the recurring disputes of the Central Government employees by setting up a machinery for consultation and discussion of controversial issues between the Central Government and its employees.

After tortuous negotiations, an agreement was reached and the Joint Consultative Machinery was set up. It was decided that issues of common interest should be discussed by the Government and its employees at the various levels and that in the event of failure to reach an agreement the disputed points should be referred to arbitration. Among the arbitrable issues was the issue of wages as also the issue of conditions of service. To maintain that the demand for a need-based minimum wage is not a wage demand and as such is non-arbitrable under the Joint Consultative Machinery agreement is nothing but sophistry. Instead of putting this demand in a general form if the Unions had raised a demand for an upward revision of wages based on this principle of need-based minimum, would it have come within the meaning of the terms "wage demand" and as such would it have become arbitrable?

The fact of the matter is that the Finance Minister bluntly told the Cabinet that whatever be the JCM agreement he was not going to allow an arbitrator, whose mind it was difficult to fathom, to upset his careful budgetary calculations. The Home Minister, too, wanted to play a strong man of the Cabinet and as such promised to mobilise the entire coercive apparatus of the Government to meet the "challenge" of the Central Government agitation and the token strike of September 19, 1968. With Smt Gandhi's blessings, taking advantage of the fact that Parliament had been prorogued, the Home Minister rushed through two draconian Ordinances declaring the strike illegal and prescribing harsh punishments for those who did not report for work. The Border Security Force, the Special Reserve Police and other forces of the Central and State Governments were mobilised on a war-footing to crush the Central Government employees' strike.

All this preparation was, however, unnecessary, for the leadership of the Central Government employees organisations, barring

a few honourable exceptions, was not in a position to make its strike threat effective. In a most perfunctory and non-serious manner, the date for token strike was decided upon and the Joint Council of Action revived with Sri S. M. Joshi as the Chairman. As I have pointed out at the beginning, the two major elements in the Central Government employees are the railway workers and the civilian defence employees. Sri Peter Alvares the President of the All India Railwaymen's Federation, which claims to represent 14 lakhs railway employees. And Sri S. M. Banerjee is the President of the second largest group, namely the All-India Defence Employees' Federation. These leaders and leaders of the Confederation of the Central Government employees, instead of taking the leadership of the strike themselves, persuaded Sri S. M. Joshi to take over as the Chairman of the Joint Council of Action. Sri Joshi has ceased to be an active trade unionist and has for years been saddled with party and political responsibilities. It was really unfair to put this heavy burden on this frail and aging leader.

After the revival of the Joint Council of Action on July 25 no attempt was made by the leadership to start a vigorous campaign among the Central Government employees or to go round the various railways, defence and other Central Government offices, installations and centres and to prepare the employees for the token strike. The financial condition of most of the Unions was poor, and when the rank and file expected the leaders to undertake tours and establish close contacts with the employees, most of the leaders stayed in New Delhi and engaged themselves in fruitless negotiations with the Central Government Ministers.

I happened to be in Jabalpur in the early part of September and also addressed the Central Ordnance Depot gate meeting. They told me that none of the top-ranking leaders of the All-India Defence Employees Federation had visited Jabalpur and that the dates given repeatedly

by some of them like Sri S. M. Banerjee were not honoured. Even in Kirkee, another important Defence centre, the employees did not respond to the JCA call for a token general strike. Had Sri S. M. Joshi not been burdened with the Chairmanship of the JCA, he would have been in a position to devote some time to Dehu Road and Kirkee.

The success of the strike action is to be judged not alone by the results it achieves in terms of the charter of demands but also by the fact as to whether the strike call is obeyed by the workers and whether the strike is complete or not. Sometimes it does happen that the workers do not win all their demands or secure only a partial victory or are even completely denied the fruits of their labour, but if the strike is complete then the workers at least do not get demoralised and any attempt at victimization of the employees can be successfully resisted.

The strike of the Central Government employees, whether token or indefinite, is not a joke and should not be undertaken in a light-hearted manner. There should be adequate pre-strike preparations. A large fighting fund must be collected. Workers should be clearly explained the significance of the strike, and effective action committees formed in each Central Government office, installation and Depot.

In this particular case, apart from the above steps, every effort should have been made to enlist popular support for the strike. After the 1960 strike it must be admitted, however regrettable it might be, that the Central Government employees have generally lost public sympathy and support. It is not that all Central Government employees are indifferent to the public good nor are all of them corrupt, but can it be denied that at least some of the Central Government employees who come in contact with the general public, behave in an atrocious manner and thereby bring the whole class of Central Government employees into disrepute? So one reason why the Central Government employees became isolated from

the mainstream of the working class movement was the lack of this general public sympathy and support.

Similarly, the leadership of the Central Government employees' organisations made no effort to win over the Central trade union organisations and federations to their cause. There are large sections of other employees who are seething with discontent, for example, those in the L.I.C., Reserve Bank as also other employees over the question of automation and also the Bank employees because of the imposition of 36 AD, which has sought to put curbs on the trade union rights of the Bank employees throughout the country. There has also been a strike of the newspaper employees. *All these struggles, agitations, discontents and frustrations could and should have been fused into a mighty working class action against the reactionary policies of the Government.*

Especially, was this mobilisation necessary in view of the disintegration of our political life which is also reflected in the trade union movement. The creation of one united central trade union federation may seem today a dream but a beginning could have been made, and can even now be made, by creating trade union councils at the local level, representing all the trade unions without exception, and on whose platform they can come together to discuss issues of common interest and, if possible, to formulate a joint action programme. Immediately after the formation of JCA, I had issued an appeal to the leaders of the Central trade union organisations and federations to take note of these various discontents, frustrations and struggles, but unfortunately there was no response. In the matter of bringing these organisations together the responsibility of the leaders of the Joint Council of Action was infinitely greater. However, the whole attitude to the question of strike was childish and immature.

This may seem a harsh judgement. But what can one say of the leaders of the AIRF,

whose constituents zonal railway unions ran away from the field of battle long before the first shot was fired in the midnight of September 18-19? The Western Railwaymen's Union, the Central Railways Mazdoor Panchayat, all affiliates of the AIRF, deserted the Joint Council of Action and thus spread demoralisation throughout the ranks of the railway workers as well as other Central Government employees. In spite of the fact that the 1964 *Bharat Bandh* call had not materialised, some leaders of the Joint Council of Action, without preparation and consultations and without pondering over the implications of the call, gave the slogan of *Bharat Bandh* on the eve of the token strike.

I must finally say a word about fasts as a weapon of political and trade union struggle. Let me state that I totally disapprove of them. I can understand helpless prisoners undertaking fasts for the redressal of their grievances in jails. But fasts have no place in trade union struggles. They divert attention from the main issue. Worry about the health and safety of the fasting person becomes the main concern. On the eve of a strike fasts are completely out of place, no matter how honourably motivated. Nor do I appreciate the chief strike leaders going to jail by defying bans on public meetings. Their place is on the picket lines. Let them face arrest while picketting factories, offices, depots, workshops and installations. These, I think are the main lessons of this strike.

Sri Chavan is being congratulated by reactionaries and businessmen on his "firm handling" of the strike. But those who know about the justness of the employees' demands as also about the weakness of the Central Government employees' trade union organisations cannot but feel that this terrible show of force was not only completely uncalled for but was also very indecent. The Government has now arrested and suspended thousands of permanent employees and have terminated the services of one out of seven

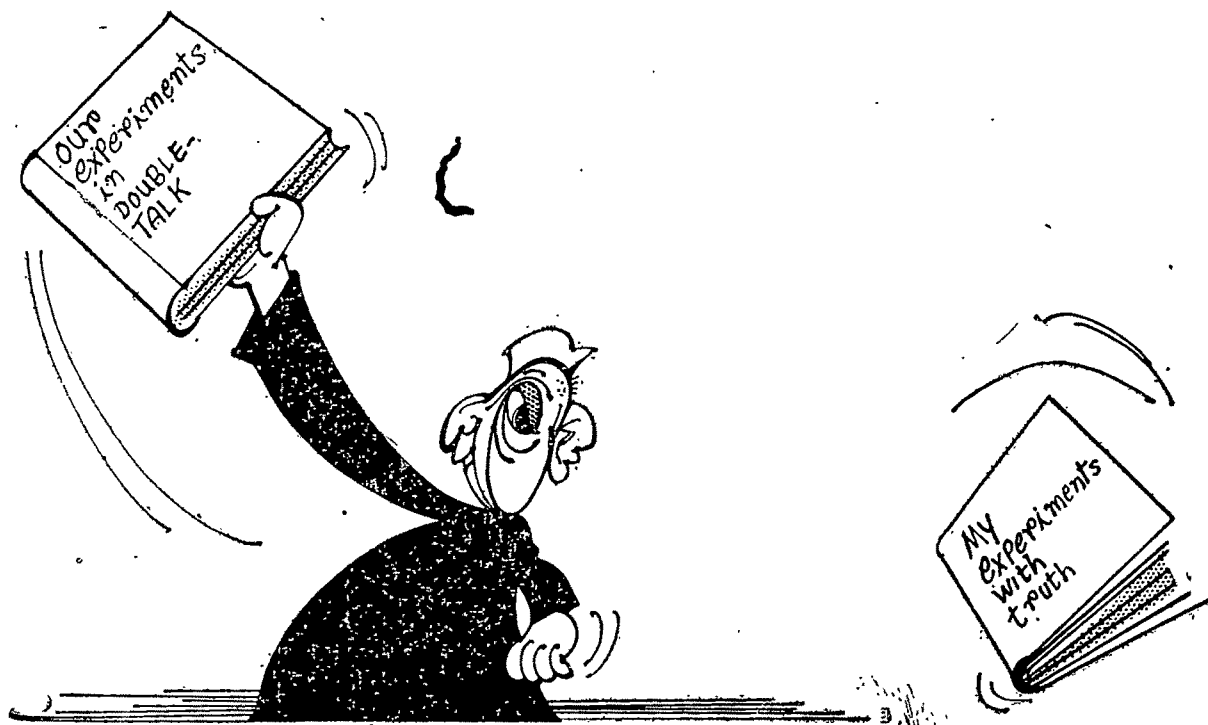
employees, especially in the P & T Department. They have also decided to withdraw the recognition of the unions that gave a call for the token strike.

This Government offensive can I think, be met by equally high determination on the part of the working class leaders to reorganise the movement, to learn the lessons of the strike, to go in for self-criticism, to correct mistakes and to draw sustenance from the common people. The question is whether the leadership is going to show such a determination and resolution in the face of adversity. The more likely sequel seems to be a general surrender before the repressive policies of the Government and a prayer to the Government that their recognition and their air-conditioned passes be restored. In exchange for these crumbs they would be required to assure the Government that in future they would be on their good behaviour.

Such a course may, probably, win back recognition for their organisations within a year or so, but will it not demoralise the workers and the trade union movement? And what about the question of victimised workers? Are they to be sacrificed? Even under our not perfect Constitution, mobilisation of public opinion in Parliament and outside can make some impact on Government policies.

It is good that Sri S. A. Dange resigned from the National Labour Commission. But there are hundreds of Tripartite Labour Committees or bodies. Why do the trade union leaders cling to these posts? If they all resign that itself would generate a lot of pressure!

The trade union leaders need not prostrate themselves before the Government. If they can sink their differences and co-ordinate their actions, the trade union movement can yet be salvaged. However, if this thing is not done then it will take a long long time before the trade unions in this country emerge from the slough of despondency and demoralisation into which they have fallen.



The Authorised Version



remembering gandhi

THE sick ritual that Gandhi is remembered by, tempts one to look at the man differently. To assess him by earthy standards, for instance, would be headily blasphemous. But his experiments with truth, and with many aspects of life, makes this irresistible. Much violence might have gone into his brittle vigilance over himself.

One wonders again if this was what made him take the *Gita* for a hand book is a spiritual Red Book of war, and all that transcending of desire has a disturbing look of incidentality in a general scheme of ruthless righteousness. There is nothing in the *Gita* that could properly be described as compassionate. Nor is it a complete answer to the very human anguish of Arjuna, whom the Lord seeks to reassure by means of a number of rigid moral premises.

Gandhi could not have chosen better, for he was as desperate and hence determined as the Lord himself. Right through his

passive resistance years, when he was winning his battles against the nonplussed British who were luxuriating in the moral sophistication of it all, he had the premonition of a time when he would be challenged to relate his nonviolence with statehood, his concept of nonpossession with political economy.

When the Pakistani raiders came into Kashmir, Gandhi took recourse to the *Gita* again. The *Gita* after all was a militant sermon to a potential deserter, and when Gandhi agreed to the sending of Indian troops to Kashmir, he knew the experiment with truth had run into its first major hazard.

For nonviolence has got to be indivisible if anything. We have divided it into segments of expediency, and Gandhi himself, as he first tasted the bitter fruit of his labours, gave his desperate sanction to that act of splintering.

The crude exploitation of Gandhi by the men and women in our leadership is of no conse-

quence. They merely illustrate an obvious kind of hypocrisy. But what ought to fascinate us is the possible awareness that Gandhi himself had of his moral contradiction. Nor was he alone in such awareness. He keeps company with all those who revolted against the human condition, and along a lesser level, with those who used power to declare war on power.

The young men and women who drop out of their oozingly rich consumer society or take to the path of dedicated revolutionaries, setting masses into motion, they are the ones who have restored Gandhi to credibility. They are asking much the same questions that Gandhi asked, only rephrasing them differently, frighteningly differently. Gandhi's carnival men, however, have no questions and need no answers. And those that venture to ask them questions on the Mahatma can always be gagged, imprisoned or shot.

—Charvaka

The Vietnamese as I know them

FREDA COOK

IN 1960 I first went to Hanoi, North Vietnam, or more correctly, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, to teach adults who would need it professionally, how to read, write and speak English fluently, and how to understand those who were using it not only as their mother tongue, but sometimes as a *lingua franca*. This last was exceedingly difficult, impossible to teach, only to be gained by years of practice.

During the first five years of my sojourn, classes grew ever more varied as graduated students took up their jobs and needed specialised help. From the Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Ministries, from Tourism, from the Teachers' University, the Foreign Publications, the Film Studio, the Voice of Vietnam Radio Station, from the Hospital, the Peace Committee, even the Army and the Security Police, came requests for coaching, so that after a time, the Committee looking after foreign workers wouldn't let me take on any more, without their consent.

I enjoyed the work enormously and found it most inspiring. The students were not only extremely hard-working in spite of hard conditions and lack of equipment, but they treated me with great affection and care, so that in the end I felt almost as if I were their mother, and the grandmother of the little families whom they brought so proudly to visit me. Of course, through the years I got to know many of them really well, their difficulties, weaknesses and mistakes, as well as their successes, and their

joys, the unexpected problems as well as the fulfilment of cherished hopes. This relationship seemed an extraordinary privilege and its end owing to the dispersal and other consequences of war a grief which is only made worse by the realisation that every Vietnamese family is suffering separation from nearest and dearest with consequent anxiety and heartache; even though one recognises the necessity in face of a cruel enemy.

Up to 1965, when American bombing of the North became a routine procedure, all the emphasis in Hanoi was on construction of a socialist society which would bring health, happiness and good standards of living and education to everyone, and on support and sympathy for the brothers in the South who were already fighting for their independence against intolerable repression by foreign invaders and Vietnamese quislings.

It wasn't easy to build; it entailed considerable sacrifice. Apart from his job and his study, everyone did extra work called "socialist labour". On my first journey to Hanoi, I heard how President Ho Chi Minh already 70 years old (in 1960), dressed like a peasant except on official occasions and took part in these extra-curricular manual activities, rolling up his trousers and wielding his hoe with the best of them.

You could see the results. My students for instance, lived in mud and thatch dormitories, worked in mud and thatch classrooms, with earth floors and no windows. They washed in the open air; their food, in general

only two meals a day, was very simple, their clothing inadequate in the winter.

That was in 1960. By 1965, new three storey buildings of brick had been built with proper roofs and windows, with showers and lavatories on each floor; here they could sleep, hold meetings, read in the library, without fear of wind or water. The textile factory was turning out quantities of cotton-padded jackets, ready-made shorts and vests, so that people no longer looked peaky and grey in the winter. Every student did a fortnight's work on a big collective farm in the hills, and in return the University received lorry-loads of vegetables and other foods. Each young man and woman planted a banana tree; each of them undertook to provide a pig with a week's fodder, and to grow vegetables near their dormitories. The menu became better and more nutritious; our young men and women were getting stronger.

Schools too were increasing all over the country. Graduates from the Teachers' University were penetrating remote districts which had never known regular teaching before. The literacy campaign of the forties—which had been undertaken almost without equipment or professional teachers—had been succeeded by an ambitious plan to build primary schools in every hamlet and secondary schools for every sizable village. How astonished I was on one occasion when my car broke down in a remote rural area to find a number of children about 14 or 15, carrying their satchels down a track through a bamboo grove. As

we had an hour to wait I persuaded my interpreter to follow them and came to a small compound where three classes were going on. The headmaster allowed us to peep in. One group was actually studying electronics, apparently following the teacher's diagrams on the board with ease and eagerly putting up their hands to answer his questions.

An Advancing Society

Imagine the effect on their peasant parents who by that time might have reached through evening classes the equivalent of the Third form in primary school. My driver, a young man of peasant stock who had learnt to drive during the Resistance, had six children tucked away in some hamlet well off the beaten track. He was exultant because maybe his sons would go to the university, and this was the attitude of millions, previously downtrodden and completely ignorant, except in the routine tasks of cultivation. Literacy had in its basic form, reached 96 percent of the population and as more and more teachers, medical workers, accountants, agronomists, technicians, were needed to supply the needs of an advancing society, more and more higher institutes of learning were in demand.

To begin with, the other socialist countries sent their experts to train and guide the Vietnamese in all new developments. Young Vietnamese went abroad to study for five or seven years. Many have come back and gradually taken over the work previously done by foreigners. For instance all the hospitals and medical clinics throughout the North from the 17th parallel to the Chinese frontier are entirely staffed by Vietnamese, and the Medical School, once in Hanoi, now in evacuation, still turns out several hundred students annually, trained to various degrees, but all able to contribute something to the well-being of their fellow countrymen.

Similarly with technical experts. At the time of Liberation in 1954, there were only six engineers in the whole country. Now those who have returned from abroad are able to train

many others, and country boys, after a few years in technical school are able to return to their hamlets, set up workshops and turn out semi-mechanised tools which increase productivity ten or twenty-fold.

I shouldn't really say "boys", for country girls have played a more and more important part in recent years since it is essential that production be maintained, in spite of the disruption caused by enemy activity. The *Three Responsibilities* Movement launched by the Union of Vietnamese Women, has been an inspiration to girls throughout the country: it has challenged them to emerge for good and all from subservience to male authority, the legacy of not far distant feudal society. They promise to be

The Three Responsibilities

(1) responsible for the well-being and good conduct of their families, so that fathers, on duty far away, may not be anxious about their old parents, or fear their children are becoming hooligans;

(2) responsible for improving methods of production so that the absence of men will not mean deficiency in things necessary for the well-being of the people; and

(3) responsible for the protection of their homes and Fatherland in the possible event of an enemy invasion.

This pledge they took very seriously. I saw many a girl, childish and rather spoilt as a young student or bride, develop into a mature responsible woman ready to endure all sorts of hardship in the fulfilment of her duties. One I know well, who is married to a doctor and with her baby boy used to live in Hanoi and teach English in a nearby suburb, now lives in a tiny hut without water, electricity or cooking facilities, with her child, her old father and invalid aunt, carries on her teaching duties with all the skill she can muster, and only very rarely see her husband who is often on duty far away where the need is greatest. She seemed so delicate and frail in the past,

but now she is somehow able to carry this heavy burden because it is all part of the united effort to maintain her country's morale and determination to win the greatest victory of Vietnamese history.

Brave and Industrious People

In another sphere I met a remarkable young woman of 25, chairman of a cooperative farm committee. Of the 120 workers on the farm, all but twelve are now women. They have also taken their "responsibilities" very seriously and obtained all the help possible from the district and provincial committees. One girl has had special training in maintaining a diesel-run pump, another has studied fish-breeding several have taken courses in nursery work; a young woman doctor has come to run small new hospital. The chairman herself has had a course on administration. These young people, with their fresh minds untrammelled by the centuries-old habits inherited by their male predecessors, have improved that farm beyond recognition. And the local militia has trained girls between 18 and 26 to take on home-guard duties day and night, and they are longing for the chance to shoot down some marauder in the skies who seeks to violate their dearly loved land.

What has the war done to these brave, industrious people? How far has the continual bombardment affected their hopes and their conditions? Well, we must own that very many precious achievements have been brought to ruin. Many hospitals, schools, workers' dwellings, factories and workshops have been destroyed. Take for instance the leprosarium, the most advanced in South East Asia, which had gathered together all those seriously affected by this scourge of the East and given them the most modern treatment. Of 4,000 lepers treated before 1965, 1,000 had been sent home restored to health, and many others were in the process of recovery. The hospital lay in a bay on the east coast, quite separate from any urban district. It consisted of the patients'

wards, the doctors' training establishment, the laboratory, workshops for the patients, and farmland so that they could be as self-supporting as possible. It was a tremendous venture and had won much praise.

Then the raiders came, and thirteen times during two days assaulted the buildings and lands around them. Many were killed, others, terrified poor souls, ran or crawled away to be lost. Why did the Americans do this? After the first raid, the radio broadcast what they were doing so that even if they were mistaken the first time, they need not have continued. Of course, the lepers were picked up once they were found, and distributed to different hospitals. One poor old man, aged 71, was killed in the raid on Bac Mai Hospital last November, and he was taking his bath in the isolation ward. None has been drawn nearer to the American way of life by the destruction of visible values; on the contrary, seeds of terrible hatred have been sown, the fruit from which may poison our earth for generations. And new plans for better hospitals are already being considered.

Malevolent Destruction

Another instance of wholly malevolent destruction was a very small secondary school in an isolated village lying well off the high road in a rice growing district. The peasants had never been able to send their daughters to secondary school as it was too far away, and not many boys had managed the journey. So they determined to build one of their own, and in September 1966 proudly opened the little brick building and sent along the local children who had passed out of primary school. Among them were twelve joyful little girls between 13 and 15.

At the end of October, 1966 they were having their third lesson; they'd done algebra, and biology and were studying a 19th-century Vietnamese poet, when the sound of planes was heard. The teacher looked out. "Quick" she called, "into the trenches, all of you." The children hurried but the bombers were quicker.

They swept over three times, over the school, over the playground, over the trenches. When the appalled parents came running to dig out their children, 30 were dead, including all twelve girls and their teacher, a girl of 25, with a little boy of her own. I met one of the men teachers, whose little sister had died. He showed me her scarf which was embroidered 'My happy year!' and "For the bright future!" We could not restrain our tears.

Every boy left alive demanded his right to join the army; every parent, every neighbour, swore to avenge these murdered innocents.

People ask how it is the Vietnamese can keep on fighting and develop all sorts of theories as to the motive force which drives them on. So far as I could see there was no mystery. These people have a very long history of resistance to foreign invaders, however powerful. In the end they have always been successful—against the Chinese, against the Mongols, against the Japanese, against the French—and have maintained their own integrity as Vietnamese. These facts are known to every boy and girl in the country and they are very proud of their heroic past. I don't think it occurs to any of them that they could be really defeated, though they know the struggle may be long and very hard.

Extraordinarily Fortunate

They are extraordinarily fortunate in their President Ho Chi Minh, whose entire life has been devoted to the liberation of his people and whose gifts of simplicity, gentleness and sympathy with the young combined with unusual intelligence, experience and ability to endure intolerable personal suffering have won him the love, admiration and trust of all the people. When "Uncle Ho" appeals for united effort and rejoices that every victory reduces his 78 years, no sacrifice seems too great. With "Uncle Ho" are the other government leaders, all men who have touched the depths and come out triumphant. It is characteristic of Ho Chi Minh that he has refused personal

honours until his country is again united.

As well as these advantages, we should remember that Vietnamese are poets by nature; material successes, do not count as much as things of the spirit. When the young electrician Nguyen van Troi failed to place a bomb under the bridge an American leader was to pass over, and broke his leg when he tried to escape, he did not lose his dignity and pride. Brought out to execution, tied to a post, faced with pressmen and cameras, this 22-year-old youth seized the moment before death to cry out: "I am no criminal. Those who murder my kinsmen and destroy my villages are the criminals. I am sorry I did not accomplish my task and only wish I had more than one life to give to my country. Long live Vietnam! Long live Ho Chi Minh!"

Exultant Words

His words, exultant even in dying, did not terrorise his fellows as his executioners had hoped. They created a feeling of glory. No youth in North Vietnam but wanted to emulate Troi. Films, stories, poems, sculptured figures have been created in his honour. He did not fail. He made the name of Vietnam resound across the world.

On National Day this September 2, Prime Minister Phom van Dong called once again to people to march forward, "to safeguard the fruits of the August Revolution, to defend the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, to liberate the South and advance towards the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland."

"More brilliant victories are awaiting us!" he promised, and the people believed him, just as they had believed President Ho Chi Minh whose New Year poem presaged the Tet offensive in the South and many consequent campaigns:

*This year is better than all other years;
News of victories resound throughout the land.
North and South vie with each other to destroy American might.
Forward! Victory is ours!*

unreality

AFTER an unseemly convulsion, the Delhi University settled down again to a tenuous quiet. A debate of sorts was carried on during the weeks of disturbance both in the Campus and in the Press. The *National Herald* of Delhi, for instance, featured a number of articles by leading academicians, trying to thrash out the *Problem*. Dr Raj of the Delhi School of Economics, initiated the discussion.

But all the discussion and the soul-searching traversed the whole vicious circle to come back to the starting point once again. This was inevitable. Because in the ultimate analysis, most of these problems, if not all, could be traced to points of political decision. If we start with indiscipline itself, indiscipline in its rather abstract manifestation, we will be forced to acknowledge the social frustrations behind it. And again further down, we will have to recognize the political inadequacies which lead to those frustrations.

The bulk of the present University students is made up of what are known as pass course candidates. The pass course leads up to an ordinary B.A. degree, as against the B.A. (Honours) Degree. Without the Honours Degree, a graduate will find it difficult to get into the post-graduate class. He might, if he makes an exceptional ranking; but such achievement is rendered difficult by the very nature of pass course instruction. The pass course classes are very large and the instruction, consequently, scrappy.

But what really emasculates this class of students is the knowledge that their degree will not entitle

to them to anything better than a clerkship, and today, even that is becoming increasingly elusive. Hence if a teacher of economics or of literature were to try to instil the higher values of his persuasion in his students who are destined to become clerks, it is little wonder if such attempt meets with rejection. They would rather get hold of a few scrappy facts from the bazaar notes and manage to get a third division degree, which is all they need to become a clerk. More time spent in *pure* learning does not at all change their basic destiny.

Over the last twenty years this frustration has made the B.A. pass degree increasingly meaningless. The academicians have always talked about falling standards; they hardly bothered to find out why the standards were falling. Twenty years is a generation, and in this one generation we have produced not merely inferior students but equally inferior teachers. Because when once the corruption of values sets in and teachers and students learn to make compromises in the matter of learning, nothing can prevent such corruption from seeping in and poisoning the entire system of education. That is what is happening in all the Universities today.

Defence and Education

Barely six years ago we were talking about giving a defence orientation to education. Fortunately, we have abandoned the idea; but the fact remains that a lopsidedly large chunk of the national income goes for 'defence preparedness'. I am not suggesting that we should question the wisdom of defence preparedness.

But certainly, there ought to be a greater correlation between the spending capacity of the country and the relative priorities given to the various heads of spending. For instance, if two or three per cent of the national budget is all that we can spend on education, if a junior and inconsequential ministry is all that we can have to manage the crucial portfolio of education, there is little use talking about indiscipline or falling standards. Education is bound to be a routine, where things go on by sufferance and from which nothings much is expected.

As I said, this problem cannot be solved by a mere academic discussion. What is needed is a social and political decision of the most fundamental nature. I might say of a *total* nature. It is futile, however, to talk of total decisions. But we expected our University men and women to give at least an intellectual projection to these problems. I find that an essentially sterile issue like the cow slaughter ban produced a lot of passion in the Campus. The Jan Sangh has considerable influence among both the students and the staff of the various colleges and of the University itself. It is a sad commentary on our situation if our Campus revolutionaries are men like Vijay Kumar Malhotra.

Alongside Sri Malhotra and the cow partisans, we have a thin lunatic fringe which sits in the coffee house making a big display of the Thoughts of Mao which they carry. It is a ritual; the Red Book has to be read not at home but in the coffee house where the people would gaze at it in wonderment, and the girls would go desperately romantic.

Perhaps I have exaggerated. But I have not exaggerated enough the basic tagedy of the Campus. The entire thing is phoney: both the grievance and the struggle against the grievance. Every one, student, teacher and University bureaucrat, is going round and round in circles of unreality. Education after all is an essentially unreal activity designed to prepare phantom men for bizarre and meaningless occupations.

—Nalanda

Lenin and Soviet Policy of Concession (1918-1921)

V. A. SHISHKIN

THE policy of concessions was an important element in the activities of the Soviet state in foreign affairs during its initial period. The idea of granting concessions to foreign capital, its theoretical grounding and practical application were a contribution of the Bolshevik Party and its leader Lenin to the treasure house of the international communist and working-class movement because this question was raised for the first time after the proletariat took over power in Russia.

The history of the Soviet concessions policy is a subject that has been little studied in Soviet literature. Several pamphlets and articles on the importance of concessions for the national economy were published before the Great Patriotic War. In post-war years concessions were examined chiefly by economists who studied state capitalism in the transition period from capitalism to socialism. At that, most of the authors do not consider at all the history of the Soviet concessions policy and Lenin's role in elaborating it in 1918-20.

As a rule the exposition of the problem begins with the concessions decree adopted on November 23, 1920. Yet, substantiation of this decree by Lenin at the end of 1920 and early in 1921, in fact, completed an entire stage in the theoretical and practical elaboration of the Soviet concessions policy.

Moreover, since most authors examine concessions chiefly from the angle of their social economic nature and place in the multi-form economy of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) during the transition period, some essential aspects of the concessions policy formulated by Lenin are left out of consideration. This above all applies to the significance of concessions as a factor in the foreign policy of the Soviet state.

Kennan's Angle

Lenin's views on the problem of concessions in 1918-1920 and the importance of the concessions policy of that period are tendentiously presented and frequently falsified outright in contemporary bourgeois historiography. George F. Kennan, well-known American historian, in a number of his works, pictures the concessions policy of the Soviet state solely as a tactical means of stirring up contradictions

between capitalist countries. He either completely denies the importance of concessions for the Soviet state (when discussing the year 1918) or reduces it almost to nought (referring to 1920-21).¹

W. Keller, another Sovietologist, the author of a book issued in all principal capitalist countries, on the contrary, pictures the concessions policy in 1920 as a panicky appeal of "the Red tsars" to the West tantamount to an "invitation to the Varangians: 'Our land is vast and abundant, but it lacks order, come! ...In contemporary language this call sounds: 'concessions'." So wrote Keller. Naturally, in his presentation the "modern foreign settlement" (in other words the concessionaries.—V.S.) became a factor of decisive importance for the development of Soviet industry, agricultural and the accumulation of technical know-how.²

All this merely stresses the great importance attached today to a study of the emergence of the Soviet concessions policy and Lenin's role in its elaboration.

Chicherin's Reference

In his reminiscences about Lenin, G.V. Chicherin, referring to the "Brest period" of Soviet-German relations wrote: "In this connection, Lenin for the first time formulated concretely his plans of attracting foreign capital and granting it big concessions. I had a number of very interesting conversations with him on this subject. Lastly, a plan of giving concessions to foreign capital, drawn up, it seems to me, by C. Bronsky, was simultaneously handed to the German government and to our American friend Colonel Raymond Robbins who took it with him to America."

Chicherin refers to two very important documents of the Soviet government: an enumeration of the terms for resuming trade relations with Germany and a plan for the development of economic rela-

(1) George F. Kennan, *The Decision to Intervene*, Princeton 1958, pp 221-224; *Soviet Foreign Policy*, Princeton, 1960, pp 35-36; *Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin*, Boston, 1962, pp. 172-174.

(2) W. Keller, *Ost minus West-Null. Der Aufbau Russlands durch den Westen*. Munchen-Zurich, 1963, S. 223-225, 230.

lations with the United States. Lenin, in his capacity as member of the Foreign Trade Commission of the Economic Policy Committee of the Supreme Economic Council, took part in drawing up both these documents. On the eve of the meeting with the German delegation, he specially examined and approved the terms for the resumption of trade with Germany, which were then read out by M.G. Bronsky, Deputy People's Commissar for Trade. These documents are of interest as the first offer of concessions to capitalist states and the first attempt to substantiate the Soviet state's concessions policy.

On the same day when Bronsky made public the theses in the mixed Russo-German commission, the Council of People's Commissars (CPC) at a sitting chaired by Lenin, examined the concessions question in a practical aspect. The CPC decision on this instructed Bronsky to "set up a special commission for drawing up a normal draft of a concession treaty" with the object of determining the detailed term of a concession agreement. Moreover, the Council of People's Commissars regarded as desirable the type of concession which would be based on the participation of "foreign capitalists in the tapping of our natural wealth on condition that they get the bigger part of the raw materials." Thus, alongside statements about readiness to cooperate with foreign capital along the lines of concessions, the Soviet government also took definite organisational measures of elaborate its policy in this field.

Economic Relations Programme

The next important step in formulating the concessions policy was linked with preparations for the First Congress of Economic Councils of the RSFSR. A programme of economic relations with capitalist countries was made public at this Congress on May 26, 1918. This programme, drawn up at a "governmental conference" in the Kremlin with Lenin's participation, already contained much more detailed terms of concessions and clearly defined the aim of granting them. The programme noted that in view of the inevitable unfavourable trade and payments balance of the RSFSR in the next few years, the possibility of getting foreign goods could be ensured "only through loans used for the purchase of such goods." Concessions were regarded as one of the most important forms of securing these loans. and they had to be given only as necessary security.

The first attempt to delineate the general terms for granting concessions was made in this programme. They consisted of eight points which boiled down to the following: concession agreements are concluded only for a definite period and only for the organisation of new enterprises, taking into account the general plan for the development of Russia's productive forces; the territorial location of such enterprises must not create definite spheres of influence of foreign states in Russia; concessionaires undertake to observe the rules of social, industrial and commercial legislation and to hand over a definite part of the output to the Government of the RSFSR at the market price. The out-

line of general terms for granting concessions was an important step in elaborating the concession policy of the RSFSR. Some of these terms (definite territorial location, firmly fixed period, observance of Soviet laws) remained major points of the concession policy of the RSFSR at all stages.

Practical Steps

Simultaneously with the elaboration of the main principles of the concessions policy, the Council of People's Commissars (CPC) continued to take up the related organisational and practical questions. On May 28, 1918, the procedure of issuing concession licenses was discussed at a sitting of the CPC held on May 28, 1918, and presided over by Lenin. The decision instructed Y. Larin, Chairman of the Economic Policy Committee of the Supreme Economic Council to submit to the CPC a draft decree providing for the sole right of the Council of People's Commissars to issue concession licenses and also for the setting up of a special commission in the Supreme Economic Council to examine all concession proposals preliminarily. Most likely this instruction was complied with, because the materials of the CPC chancellery contain a draft decree on the procedure for licensing concessions, dated June 1918, with a notation "For Lenin". The decree itself was not adopted by the Council of People's Commissars in 1918.

In July 1918, in view of the Soviet-German talks in Berlin, the concessions question was again raised by the Council of People's Commissars. It demanded that departments responsible for elaborating this decree treat this assignment with utmost attention and urgency. On July 20, Lenin spoke at the sitting of the CPC and pointed out that M. Bronsky failed to carry out the assignment of the CPC of May 15 to set up a commission for framing a draft normal concession treaty with foreigners. The Council of People's Commissars, after reprimanding Bronsky, decided to set up this commission in the following composition: Lomov, Bronsky, Gukovsky, Milyutin, Uspensky and Radek. The commission, supplemented by experts, was instructed within five days to draw up and submit to the CPC a draft normal concession treaty and also to examine "the available proposals for concessions received from foreigners."

CPC Theses

Most likely, the draft "normal concession treaty" was understood to mean the further detailed elaboration of the terms for granting concessions, because the Commission's work resulted in "Theses, drawn up by a CPC commission, on the terms for attracting foreign capital to Russia in the commodity form."

In addition to the main points, borrowed from the programme made public at the First Congress of Economic Councils, the Theses had other points which supplemented and specified the terms of concessions. Specifically, one of the new points envisaged in exceptional cases special privileges to concession enterprises (the concessionaire, for example, could by guaranteed the payment of interest on the invested

capital, and so on). The demand for fulfilling the plan for commissioning capacity by definite, exactly stipulated dates, agreed upon in the treaty, was an important term which was reflected in all subsequent activities in this field.

On August 9, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars took note of the statement made by the Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council that the Theses outlining the terms for attracting foreign capital were being sent to all People's Commissars of the RSFSR. Thus, this document became an instruction by which the relevant Soviet departments had to guide themselves in concessions negotiations with foreign businessmen.

While the Soviet state was elaborating its concessions policy quite energetically, making repeated statements about its readiness to cooperate with foreign capital and offering concrete terms of this cooperation, the stand of the Western powers did not hold out big hopes of realising these plans. The capitalist world was not yet prepared to reconcile itself to the very existence of the Soviet state, let alone to engage in broad economic cooperation with it. That is why concessions activities in 1918-1919 were extremely modest. It resolved to a general exchange of opinion about concessions with Germany's representatives and R. Clark, head of a British delegation who came to Moscow in July 1918, and also to examining the offers made by Western business circles.

Western Reactions

Of greatest significance among these offers was the plan for a concession submitted by A.A. Borisov, a Russian artist, and E. Gannevig, a Norwegian citizen. The plan called for building a railway from the Ob River through Kotlas to a junction with the Baltic Railway (Zvanka Station or Petrograd). Gannevig was closely connected with Anglo-American industrial and financial circles, in view of which the contemplated concession was important for the RSFSR not only economically but also politically. The original concession offer was examined from July to December 1918 by a CPC commission (A. Lomov, chairman, L.B. Krasin and Y.I. Uspensky) and by the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council. Agreement was reached in principle on building a railway at a cost of 2,000 million rubles; the outlays were to be compensated by a large timber concession for 48 years. On February 4, 1919, the draft treaty was submitted to the Council of People's Commissars.

Lenin prepared for that sitting a draft resolution on the granting of the concession. The draft was adopted with minor editorial changes as a decision of the CPC. It once again stressed the readiness of the Soviet state to cooperate economically with bourgeois circles along the lines of concessions. The Council of People's Commissars, it was pointed out in the decision, "recognises that concessions to representatives of foreign capital in general, in principle, are permissible in the interest of developing the productive forces." As regards the concession for the building of the railway, the CPC, considering

this construction important and necessary, decided "for accelerating the practical and final decision to ask the initiators to submit proof of their references to connections with allied capitalist firms." A group of Party leaders and statesmen were instructed to draw up the final variant of the concession treaty and to present a draft resolution on this question to Lenin for signing.

Although subsequent talks with the prospective concessionaires produced no results, the activity of Soviet state agencies helped to bring out the essence of the Soviet concessions policy and the role of concessions in international politics and in economic development within the country.

Significance Assessed

How was the significance of concessions assessed during the first years of the Soviet state?

As we shall show, a detailed characteristic of the nature and importance of the Soviet concessions policy was given by Lenin later on, in his works of 1920-21 associated with the concessions decree. But as early as 1918, Lenin's statements on this question and also the discussion of the concession for a northern railway indicated that the Soviet Government took into account the political and economic importance of concessions.

Politically, concessions were considered a means for influencing imperialist circles of Western countries for the purpose of paralysing the interventionist aspirations of the most reactionary groups of the bourgeoisie. It is this purpose of the concessions policy that Chicherin noted when he characterised the tactic of the Soviet representatives in Berlin. It consisted in efforts to get foreign business circles interested in the possibility of gaining economic benefits from cooperating with the RSFSR and to warn them against futile war ventures. In one of his interviews, Chicherin also pointed out that after the signing of the Brest Peace Treaty the Soviet state adhered to a policy aimed at the "slow and organic consolidation of our existence". As an example of this policy he cited the call to the capitalist to help in the economic restoration of Russia through concessions and specifically the talks with Gannevig's representatives. Lenin himself, after drawing up the draft resolution on granting a concession for a northern railway, in a footnote to the draft asked Lomov and Krasin what they thought of the resolution "from the business (and diplomatic) point of view."

It would be fundamentally wrong, however, to reduce the offers of concessions made by the Soviet Government in 1918, solely to the realm of tactics, as is done by some bourgeois authors. We have seen that the Council of People's Commissars devoted several sittings to practical question of concessions. This means that, taking into consideration the political and diplomatic importance of concessions, the Soviet Government at the same time examined them from the purely business angle as a means of developing the economy on the basis of agreements with foreign capital in the economic field.

As early as the spring of 1918, Lenin revealed in detail the advantages of state capitalism over small commodity production, which does not yield to accounting and regulation, in conditions of the transition from capitalism to socialism. Somewhat later, referring to direct economic significance of a northern railway concession, Lenin described it as "tribute" to imperialism which ultimately leads to the restoration of certain sectors of the economy and consequently to the consolidation of the Soviet state. The economic importance of concessions is delineated more distinctly by Lenin in his letter to American workers of September 23, 1919. "The granting of concessions under reasonable terms," he wrote, "is desirable also for us, as one of the means of attracting into Russia, during the period of the coexistence side by side of socialist and capitalist states, the technical help of the countries which are more advanced in this respect."

Lenin's deeply dialectical and bold idea of concessions was based on a precise scientific analysis of the economy in the transition period, which was not at once rightly appreciated in Party and Soviet circles. A discussion of the terms of the concession for the northern rail route showed that some of the Party and Government cadres saw in concessions if not a denial of socialist principles in general then a factor which seriously contradicted the economic nature of the proletarian state.

Lozovsky's Attack

At the First Congress of Economic Councils A. Lozovsky who criticised the report on the economic consequences of the Brest Peace, said: "From the part of the programme read out here we learned about concessions and other very fine, but hardly socialist things. We see that there is absolutely no trace of socialism in this socialist organisation of the economy."

During the discussion of the contemplated concession for the northern railway a keen debate flared up in the press. Two points of view distinctly emerged: one defending the need for economic agreements with capitalism in conditions of the coexistence of the two systems and the other, against the concessions policy which supposedly was a "betrayal of our cause", a manifestation of "faint-heartedness" and "disbelief in the creative powers of the proletariat." N. N. Sukhanov, chairman of the Financial and Economic Board of the State Installations Committee of the Supreme Economic Council, for example, sharply opposed the granting of concessions. He held that the granting of concessions was a "disastrous business" from every angle. "I see," he said "a complete contradiction between the general system of our economic policy and the handing over of our wealth to private capital." In his opinion, the concessions policy was no less harmful for the world working-class movement which could be weakened by it. Top functionaries of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions like Lozovsky, mentioned earlier, Tomsky, Weinberg and others attacked the concessions policy from "Left" positions.

The polemic was ended by the decision of the

Council of People's Commissars of February 4, 1919, which, as pointed out earlier, confirmed that in principle concessions were permissible in the interest of developing the productive forces.

Thus ended the first stage of elaborating the concessions policy of the Soviet state. In this period the political and national economic importance of concessions was brought out in most general outline, their socio-economic nature was delineated and the main terms for granting concessions to foreign capital were formulated. The further development of the concessions policy and its implementation could take place only in more favourable international conditions.

The Civil War and the political and economic blockade of the RSFSR naturally relegated the question of concessions to the background, depriving it of any practical purpose for a time. But it would be wrong to assume that the idea of concessions was forgotten and was only revived by the decree of November 23, 1920, as an element of the emerging transition to the New Economic Policy..

In Soviet historic literature on the concessions problem no attempt has been made to fill the essential gap in the study of the pre-history of the decree of November 23, 1920. Yet the published and chiefly the unpublished materials in the archives attest to the intensive elaboration of the concessions policy of the RSFSR from the very beginning of 1920, in conditions of the second peaceful respite.

In January 1920, in view of the decision of the Supreme Council of the Entente to lift the economic blockade of the RSFSR, L.B. Krasin wrote "Theses on Concessions." The 12 points of this document contained the following main ideas: restoration of the transport system and industry and satisfaction of the needs of the population make it necessary to obtain considerable quantities of goods from abroad chiefly for production purposes. In view of the limited resources of the RSFSR for payments and settlement these could be paid for in the immediate future only in the form of concessions. The Theses stressed that notwithstanding the evident privileges that would have to be given to the concessionaires, the saving of industry and transport demanded the "broadest granting of concessions."

Krasin's Theses

Krasin confined the purpose of concessions to serving as a means of payment for the imported goods, without revealing all the political and economic aspects of the concessions policy in socialist conditions. Moreover, Krasin obviously exaggerated the role of concessions, characterising them in fact as the only means for restoring the economy of the RSFSR. At the same time Krasin's Theses gave a detailed exposition of the terms and principles of concessions, on which subsequent official decisions in this sphere were based, and served as the starting point of a discussion leading to the final ascertainment of the essence and aims of the Soviet concessions policy in 1920-21.

Krasin's Theses were discussed at a joint meet-

ing of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions on March 5, 1920, in the course of which essential amendments were introduced. It was proposed, for example, to emphasise the idea that "the basis for restoring industry and economic life in Russia was the Soviet economy itself." Thus, concessions were to be regarded as an auxiliary, and not the only possible, means for restoring the country's economy. The conference also arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary to set the period of concessions depending on the concrete conditions of operating each enterprise.

On March 20, 1920, Krasin's Theses were discussed at a sitting of the CPC chaired by Lenin. It led to a serious redrafting of the entire text. The final variant of the Theses, adopted by the Council of People's Commissars, as before, regarded concessions as a means of payment for imported goods, but only as supplementary to direct payment in gold and raw materials. All propositions about concessions as the main or only method of restoring the country's economy were deleted. The concession periods were to be set in accordance with the recommendations made by the meeting of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. The Soviet state was to receive the priority right of buying the goods produced by concessions enterprises. All the main principles and terms for granting concessions were borrowed with minor changes from the original text of Krasin's Theses. They resolved to the following. The granting of concessions must not inflict harm on the country's industry, concessions are called upon to develop only the sectors which the state cannot advance with its own forces; to allow concession enterprises which least of all exhaust the natural resources and promote the swiftest growth of the country's production potential. Concessionaires undertake to observe Soviet laws, technical and other rules and instructions; it was emphasised that a monopoly of an entire branch of industry was impermissible.

The Council of People's Commissars turned over the Theses for final editing, in accordance with the proposals made at its sitting on March 20, to a special commission consisting of representatives of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade, the Supreme Economic Council and the People's Commissariat for Justice. A special decision was also adopted instructing the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council to inform foreign circles about the contemplated concessions through unofficial reports in the press and also to set up at the Presidium an inter-departmental concessions commission. The CPC considered it advisable not to make public the adopted Theses, but only to send them for guidance to the interested People's Commissars and heads of departments. On March 25, the Theses on Concessions, signed by People's Commissar for Foreign Trade Krasin, People's Commissar for Justice Kursky and Vice-Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council Milyutin, were submitted to Lenin and approved by him on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars. At a sitting

of the CPC on April 8, 1920, it was announced that Lenin had signed the Theses on Concessions.

The peaceful respite early in 1920 was short-lived: It was interrupted in April 1920 by the offensive of Pilsudski's army. That is why the decision of the CPC of March 20 to publicise abroad the Soviet policy of concessions was not carried out. Up to the autumn of 1920, no articles on this question appeared in the Press. Reports from abroad were meagre and consisted mainly of general statements made by Krasin at the talks with representatives of the Supreme Economic Council of the Entente concerning the attitude of the Soviet state to the granting of concessions. Nonetheless extensive work in this field was continued.

Among concessions problems along production lines mention should be made of the application of the Swedish SKF (Svenska-Kullagar-Fabriken) to be given a concession for the Moscow bearing factory and negotiations with the German IG chemical concern about the production of aniline dyes in Soviet Russia. In London an RSFSR delegation began talks with a number of businessmen from different countries about working the timber tracts of the RSFSR along concession lines.

Vanderlip's Offer

A special place in the concessions talks of that period was held by the offer of the California businessman W.B. Vanderlip. In talks with foreign representatives of the RSFSR Krasin and Litvinov in the summer of 1920, he put forward the idea of a concession for exploiting the natural resources of Russia's eastern regions. He claimed that he acted with the approval of Harding, who was then a candidate in the US Presidential elections, and asserted that such a concession envisaged recognition of the Soviet Government by the United States and the latter's opposition to Japan's territorial claims.

Litvinov's report about these talks was discussed on August 5, 1920 at a Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) which instructed the Soviet representative to ascertain how serious the proposal was and what guarantees backed the concession in the Far East. The Soviet Government was interested in a possible political and economic rapprochement with the United States, which was stressed by Vanderlip. In September 1920, he was allowed to come to Moscow for talks. On September 18, Vanderlip sent a letter to the Council of People's Commissars which contained his proposal concerning the use of Russia's natural wealth East of the 160th meridian, including Kamchatka. Lenin was in favour of negotiations with Vanderlip and urged to conduct them at "top speed."

The negotiations were held throughout October by a commission of the Council of People's Commissars consisting of representatives of the Supreme Economic Council, People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade. On October 12, the CPC approved the line of the commission in the negotiations. At

the end of the month preliminary understanding was reached on giving a 60-year concession in the indicated areas for prospecting and extracting coal and oil and for fishing. The Kamchatka concession also provided for the Soviet state's participation in developing the natural resources. The entry of the concession treaty into force was made conditional on de facto recognition of Soviet Russia by the United States and the resumption of normal relations between them not later than July 1, 1921.

Since Vanderlip could not get the American Government to live up to that condition the treaty remained unimplemented. It should be noted that Vanderlip's offer and his references to connections with US political and business circles were not sufficiently grounded. Subsequently Lenin pointed out that Vanderlip merely "boasted of his ties with the American Government." Be that as it may, the talks with Vanderlip as such were of definite positive significance in the struggle of the Soviet state to break out of economic isolation and establish normal relations with capitalist countries. Lenin, voicing doubt in the weight of Vanderlip's connections and offer, nevertheless noted that in him "we have won a propagandist for trade relations with Soviet Russia, and even if we do not get anything except the proposed agreement on concessions we shall still be able to say that we have gained something."

The talks with Vanderlip, in addition to exerting certain influence on the US business world, exacerbated Japanese-American contradictions and spurred on the British bourgeoisie, which was afraid of its US rival, to rapprochement with the RSFSR.

Examination of concrete concession proposals in economic departments of the RSFSR and the Council of People's Commissars and also the publication of a number of statements on this question in the press in the autumn of 1920 stimulated further elaboration of the concession policy. This was also facilitated by the great improvement in the international position of the Soviet state as a result of the armistice with Poland and the defeat of Wrangel.

From the end of October 1920, the Council of People's Commissars and Lenin personally devoted increasing attention to the concessions problem both in its practical and theoretical aspect.

On October 26, 1920, Lenin raised the question of concessions in Siberia at a sitting of the CPC. A commission of representatives of the Supreme Economic Council, the People's Commissariat for Agriculture and the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade, was set up to prepare a preliminary report for the Government on this question.

On October 30, the Council of People's Commissars, after hearing this report, instructed a commission headed by V. Milyutin to choose concession objects by sectors of the economy and present in detail the main reasons for the contemplated concessions. Since the formulation of a plan of concession objects required considerable time, the CPC at its sitting on November 16 concentrated attention on the draft decision submitted by Milyutin in connection with the elaboration of concession objects in Siberia. Most likely, the text of the draft did not satisfy the Council of People's Commissars because

that sitting adopted a resolution written by Lenin, which proposed to set up a special commission for redrafting and editing the part of the resolution suitable for publication abroad. The commission consisted of Lenin, Milyutin, Kursky and Sereda. The new draft had to state the decision of the Government in principle to grant concessions, give a resume of the general economic and legal terms of concessions and a list of the objects with a characteristic of their economic importance. On November 23, the Council of People's Commissars adopted the concessions decree, drawn up in the commission headed by Lenin. It was also decided to issue a pamphlet containing the text of the decree and the list of concessions objects. Several days later the pamphlet prepared for the press was submitted to Lenin.

The decree noted that the attraction of foreign capital along concession lines was regarded by the Soviet Government as a practical task for the purpose of accelerating the restoration of the productive forces of Russia and the entire world economy. The decree outlined the general economic and legal terms of concessions which could be concluded with "substantial trust worthy" foreign businessmen. They envisaged giving the concessionaire a share of the produced goods with the right of exporting them; trade privileges in case he applies special technical improvements on a large scale; a sufficiently long period of operating the enterprise; a guarantee against confiscation or nationalisation; a right to hire workers with the observance of the labour code; the obligation not to abrogate the treaty unilaterally.

From the content of the decree and the pamphlet it is easy to see that their main purpose was to inform widely the foreign business world about the concessions policy of the RSFSR. In effect, the decree of November 23 and the appended materials were the first (after the elaboration of the concessions policy in 1918) attempt of the Soviet state practically to attract foreign capital to the national economy of the RSFSR on a wide scale.

Naturally, the transition to concessions demanded a full and final ascertainment of their nature both from the viewpoint of their position in the country's socialist economy and in the sphere of the international affairs of the Soviet state.

Lively Discussion

The publication of the decree of the Council of the People's Commissars of November 23 was followed by lively discussion of the concessions question in the press and in Party and Soviet circles. A number of articles explained the concession policy. From December 2 to 16 *Pravda* carried eight articles signed by I.I. Stepanov-Skvortsov, which somewhat later were published in the form of a pamphlet. *Izvestia* printed an article by G. Bergman "On the Question of Concessions" and *Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta* an article by A. Lomov "The Soviet Republic and the Capitalist World" (on the Question of Concessions)" and so on.

These articles contained a number of important statements on certain aspects of the concessions policy. But a full and all-round examination of

the essence aims and nature of the Soviet policy of concessions was given by Lenin in a number of his statements and works at the end of 1920 and beginning of 1921. Among them mention should first of all be made of the speech at the meeting of cell's secretaries of the Moscow organisation of the RCP (B) on November 26, 1920; report on concessions at a meeting of activists of the Moscow organization of the RCP (B) on December 6, 1920; report on concessions delivered to the RCP (B) group at the Eighth Congress of Soviets on December 21, 1920; summing up speech on the report on the substitution of the surplus-grain appropriation system for a tax in kind, delivered on March 15, 1921, at the tenth congress of the RCP (B); report on the tax in kind delivered on April 9, 1921, and the work *The Tax in Kind (The Significance of the New Economic Policy and Its Conditions)*. The meaning and purpose of the Soviet concessions policy is fully brought out in these works.

Lenin's Elaboration

Lenin revealed the economic nature of concessions and their place in the economy of Soviet Russia; the essence of the concessions policy from the viewpoint of relations of the socialist state with foreign capital; the international, political and economic aims (or significance) of the Soviet Concessions policy.

In his works devoted to the New Economic Policy Lenin for the first time, as compared with his works in 1918, directly said that concessions were probably the most clear and distinct from of state capitalism. Proceeding from this appraisal of the nature of concessions as a variety of state capitalism, Lenin considered it more preferable to allow their development than to hand over to small private businessmen some or other sectors of the economy which the state was unable to restore with its own forces. "What is a concession under the Soviet system from the viewpoint of socio-economic forms and their relationship," Lenin asked and right there replied: "It is a treaty, bloc, alliance of the Soviet, that is 'proletarian, state power with state capitalism against the small-owner (patriarchal and petty-bourgeois) elements.'"

This does not mean that Lenin underestimated the definite danger involved in allowing state capitalism in the form of concessions for developing the national economy along socialist lines. But he firmly believed that the Soviet state, utilising its political power and the key economic positions in its hands, would be able to "digest" capitalism engendered by concession enterprises. "There is nothing to fear in concessions," Lenin stated, "so long as we retain possession of all the state enterprises and weigh up exactly and strictly the concessions we grant, and the terms and the scale on which we grant them. Growing capitalism will be under control and supervision while political power will remain in the hands of the working class and of the workers' state."

No Idyllic Harmony

The essence of concessions, from the angle of

the relations of the Soviet state with foreign capital were described by Lenin as follows: On the one hand, it is a certain "tribute", "levy", inasmuch as without definite guarantees of profit no self-respecting capitalist would agree to organise production, to import machinery and equipment and apply advanced technical experience. On the other hand, concessions by no means signify a peaceful compromise, an idyllic harmony of the socialist and the capitalist modes of production or, as Lenin put it, the embracing of the socialist lamb and the capitalist wolf. A concession, Lenin pointed out, is war transferred to the realm of the economy, "a contest of the two modes of production, two formations, two economies—communist and capitalist."

Lastly, in his works Lenin thoroughly analysed the international political and economic aim of issuing concessions to foreign capital. Expressing certain anxiety over the slow implementation of the concessions policy. Lenin at the same time repeatedly stressed that by itself the concessions programme of the Soviet state, even negotiations for concessions are of great political significance for strengthening its international positions, and in case of practical application of the concessions programme the political effect would be even greater.

Political Arguments

What did Lenin understand as the "political arguments" in favour of issuing concessions?

First, the granting of concessions to various groups of foreign capital causes discord, deepens contradictions between imperialist powers, hampering their joint action against the socialist state. Lenin pointed to the following serious contradictions between capitalist states: Japanese-American; between the United States and European countries; between Germany and the victorious countries. Talks about the Vanderlip concession aggravated Japanese-American contradictions and thereby undermined the possibility of their co-ordinated aggressive actions in the Far East. Concessions to German industrialists would facilitate Soviet-German economic and political rapprochement and the break away of Germany from the united anti-Soviet front of the Entente, and so on.

Second, concessions talks and agreements intensified the desire of the bourgeoisie of the great powers to conclude trade agreements and establish peaceful relations with the RSFSR. "Concessions presume some kind of reestablishment of peaceful agreements, the restoration of trade relations; they presume the possibility for us to begin direct and extensive purchases of the machinery we need", Lenin noted. He especially stressed the desirability of utilising the concessions policy for normalising relations with the United States, Britain and Germany.

Third, the issue of concessions would paralyse the interventionist intentions of imperialist circles vis-a-vis Soviet Russia. "The existence of concessions," Lenin noted, "is an economic and political argument against war. States that might go to

war with US will not be able to do so if they take concessions. This will bind them."

Fourth, the concession policy has tremendous significance as propaganda of the peaceful aspirations of the Soviet state, of its most earnest intentions to restore its economy.

Economic Benefit

Attaching such serious importance to the political aspect of the problem of concessions, Lenin stressed their indisputable "economic benefit." He saw in concessions one of the means for accelerating the restoration of the country's economy and carrying out the electrification plan. Without exaggerating the role of concessions in developing the Soviet economy (in contrast to Krasin and other economic executives), Lenin nevertheless regarded them as a supplementary means of economic restoration. "The moderate and cautious application of the concessions policy," will undoubtedly help us quickly to improve (to a modest extent) the state of industry....."

The economic purposes of concessions, in Lenin's opinion, moreover, consisted in obtaining by the state from the concessionaire of part of the goods he produced, in paying in this way for the imported industrial equipment and restoring trade with the West, utilising the advanced technical forces of capitalist states and their know-how for the scientific organisation of production.

Lenin did not confine himself to theoretically substantiating the concessions policy and explaining it at many meetings of Party functionaries and Soviet officials. He consistently worked for the adoption of practical measures to implement it and the framing of necessary decisions and creating conditions to ensure the application of the decree of November 23, 1920. On the basis of his draft the Council of People's Commissars on February 1, 1921 took a decision which approved in principle the issue of oil concessions and instructed the Supreme Economic Council to draw up their terms. In February 1921, Lenin took an active part in discussing this question at a meeting of Central Committee members of the RSP (B) and a sitting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee.

In March the 10th Congress of the Party approved the resolution "The Soviet Republic in Capitalist Encirclement" where a big place was assigned to the concessions question, the CPC decree of November 23 and the decision of February 1, 1921 on the issue of oil concessions being reaffirmed. Lenin's views on the role and significance of the concessions policy and also some principles of the issue of concessions, formulated already in the Theses of March 25, are clearly displayed in that resolution. Basing himself on this Congress decision, Lenin in a telegram to L.B. Krasin of March 19 asked him to expedite the talks abroad on oil and other concessions and inform him more frequently on this score. In March and April Lenin elaborated the principles of concessions treaties from the viewpoint of the relationships of the foreign employer with the Soviet workers recorded in the decisions of the CPC of March 29, 1921, and upheld

them in the discussion with M. Tomskey, D. Ryazanov, A. Shlyapnikov, A. Golzman and A. Lozovsky.

Elaboration of the theoretical principles of the Soviet concessions policy in effect was completed in the spring of 1921. The further development of this policy was already linked with the specification of some or other of its aspects in definite talks and agreements with foreign capitalists in the practical organisation of concessions on the territory of the RSFSR as applied to the conditions of the New Economic Policy.

Concessions did not become widespread in the economy of USSR. The main reason was the refusal of big monopoly capital to finance concession enterprises in the USSR, the striving of the largest monopolies to foil socialist construction. Although the economic significance of concessions for our country was not great, a number of concessions enterprises (Ball-bearing, timber and others), played a definite part in organising certain categories of production, in providing jobs to unemployed workers, and so on.

From the international and political angle concessions and talks along these line undoubtedly helped to breach the united front of the imperialist powers and facilitated the emergence of the Soviet state from economic and political isolation. The concessions programme was a major component part of the Soviet proposals for a peaceful settlement in Europe at the Genoa and The Hague conferences. Concessions talks with representatives of the biggest German concerns facilitated the conclusion of the Treaty of Rapallo and the Soviet-German political and economic rapprochement.

Peaceful Coexistence

Lastly, wide publicity given to the Soviet concessions policy as an essential part of the foreign policy of the RSFSR played a big role in rallying public opinion among foreign broad pacifist bourgeois circles in favour of recognising the Soviet state and establishing political, economic and cultural relations with it. In other words, to a considerable degree thanks to this did Lenin's idea of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems became feasible in the world.

Assessing the significance of concessions from this point of view, a special commission of the Central Committee Political Bureau pointed out in its resolution of June 1, 1925 that "the concessions policy of the Soviet state when it was proclaimed and in the subsequent initial period played a considerable positive part in our international relations." Consequently, the political significance of concessions, which Lenin foresaw was fully confirmed.

On the whole, the concessions policy of Soviet Russia, notwithstanding the limited nature of its economic results was a positive factor in strengthening the positions of the socialist state in the most intricate and difficult period of its development.

(This appeared originally in Russian in the Soviet journal Voprosy Istorii KPSS, No. 6, 1968).

Zambia on Road to Self-reliance

RAMESH JAURA

ZAMBIA is located on the changing map of Africa in an extremely unenviable position. Rich in copper deposits, whose production is the largest in the African continent, Zambia with 290,587 square miles territory is landlocked.

The problems faced by this landlocked, newly independent country are not of the common run. Zambia is surrounded by Portuguese-held, now war-torn, Angola; Pretoria-ruled South-West Africa, the illegal regime of Smith's Rhodesia; Portuguese-held Mozambique; and Dr Hastings Banda's Malawi. The friendly independent African States bordering it are the Congo-Kinshasa and Tanzania.

Zambia, thus, not only finds itself cut off from the rest of the world but also is forced to live under the shadow of hostile, White-minority, racist regimes. The arch leader of these intransigent governments is the apartheid Republic of South Africa.

The existence of Zambia is threatened also because of its active support for liberation movements in Angola, South-West Africa, Rhodesia and Mozambique. The MPLA, SWAPO, ANC-ZAPU and FRELIMO are stated to have their bases in the Zambian territory. This is used as an alibi by the racist regimes to violate the air space and ground territory of Zambia. South African troops and White population have been deployed by the Ian Smith regime to fight back the ANC-ZAPU guerrillas.

With the ANC-ZAPU attacks becoming intensive, Angolan freedom fighters' opening a new

front against the Portuguese forces in Angola, the prospect of threat to Zambia's existence becoming a reality is no longer remote. The White-minority racist regimes in Southern Africa have made common cause to check the steadily advancing columns of African freedom fighters determined to liberate their brethren. No surprise, therefore, that Western-backed regimes are now coordinating their action to fight what would appear to be a losing battle to maintain status quo.

How long will Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda and Tanzanian President Nyerere continue to live under the shadow of attack? Will they take up arms and fight against Ian Smith who survives because of the apartheid South African regime's military assistance? Can they afford to risk hard-won freedom in a confrontation with South Africa which is in possession of the most up-to-date and offensive military arsenal in the entire African continent?

All these questions have to be asked simultaneously. And, the answers are to be sought keeping in view the harsh realities of the Southern African situation. Behind these queries, however, there is a clear-cut realisation that it is fruitless and ridiculous to expect the White-minority regimes to be conscientious. That they should persist in defying the world opinion expressed in a number of UN resolutions is significant. Having lost the battle to freedom struggles in the rest of Africa, the Western governments do not wish to take risks in southern Africa which is under

the White-minority regimes that guarantee them a share of the spoils south of the Zambesi river.

It is in this context that the failure of President Kaunda's mission for arms to London last July is to be viewed. Colin Legum, in an article in *London Observer* (July 21, 1968), wrote:

"Mr Wilson and his colleagues, while stressing the country's difficulties, hold out no hopes for any fresh initiative in southern Africa. They will continue to support the energetic policy of Mr Crossland at the Board of Trade to expand our trade with South Africa, thus making British foreign policy even more dependent than it already is on South Africa's goodwill.

"All this adds up to saying there's going to be no change in British policies despite Dr Kaunda's warnings (that a race war of Vietnam proportions is building up in South Africa). The limits of these policies are to provide Zambia with purely defensive missiles (on purely commercial basis) and holding the present line of sanctions against Rhodesia—and even this is too drastic for Conservatives to swallow."

If there were any doubts about Britain's real intentions in regard to the illegal regime of Ian Smith, these have been removed in the wake of reports about the outcome of the recent visit to Rhodesia by James Bottomley, Under Secretary in the Commonwealth Office. Though a British Government spokesman said on September 26 that no immediate change was expected, reports from London did not consider it unlikely that

Britain might scrap the principle of "no independence before majority African rule", commonly described as "Nibma".

This explains why Presidents Kaunda and Nyerere cannot come to terms with the White-minority supremacist. "They cannot accept any compromise with the Smith regime. And, they cannot—as they are urged to do—turn against movements committed to overturning White supremacists". (Colin Legum in *Observer*, July 21, 1968).

Impact on Public Opinion

Colin Legum's view reflects the "considerable impact on public opinion" which President Kaunda made during his London mission. Whatever the enlightened Britons might think, the official Britain refuses to recognise that the problem of Rhodesia would not be solved without a confrontation with South Africa. Perhaps, because it has neither the economic nor military strength nor the political will for such a confrontation. The possibility of Zambia and Tanzania, thus approaching the Socialist nations for arms, after the Western States have refused such assistance, is not ruled out.

It would, however, be wrong to conclude that Zambia, during the last four years of its becoming independent, has been living in search of arms. About 33 months ago Rhodesia declared UDI, and Zambia lost no time in taking steps to reduce its dependence on its southern neighbour. Imports from Rhodesia which accounted for 40 per cent of the total in 1964 were only 11 per cent in the first nine months of 1967. Since then, Zambia has announced practical results from two earlier major steps forward in making itself even more independent of Rhodesia, at the same time reducing the cost of import substitution and tying itself firmly into the economy of the East, rather than southern Africa.

The oil pipeline between Dar-es-Salaam and the Zambian copper belt was completed recently. Zambia's coalfield, Mamba, has achieved full production of 80,000 tonnes a month

to end Zambia's bulk dependence on Rhodesian coal, its second largest import after electricity. Completion of the oil pipeline in which Zambia owns 75 per cent shares and Tanzania 25 per cent, would give Zambia adequate supplies of petroleum products for the first time since UDI.

The pipeline is the first transport link between Zambia and East Africa, the second is the railway route being surveyed by the Chinese, and the third, famous Great North Road whose surface—crumbling with the weight of oil tankers which have previously carried the oil from Tanzania to Zambia—is now to be tarred. The carriers are being replaced by lorries carrying general cargo.

President Kaunda is fully aware that Zambian economy will not become independent so long as the Western firms continue to wield power. These firms also hold the copper mines and repatriate most of their profits. Steps to correct the anomalies in Zambian economy were outlined by President Kaunda in his new economic policy in April this year. While the big copper mining companies have not been nationalised, "until another announcement is made", they are no longer allowed to remit in dividends abroad more than 50 per cent of their profits, or 30, per cent of their equity capital instead of 80 per cent profits they have been distributing abroad in recent years. In addition, the royalties system may be changed in a way still to be specified but one which will not change the total of money accruing to the Zambian government." (*The Economist*, April 27, 1968).

New Economic Policy

But the new economic policy seeks to deal a hard blow to the light and medium industries, and commerce "which remains to an exceptional extent in the hands of expatriates, Whites and Asians who have not taken Zambian citizenship". However, these Whites and Asians who have taken or take Zambian citizenship are not affected. To start

with, President Kaunda has announced, the State will have a 51 per cent participation in 26 large firms controlled by foreigners, who will have a direct interest in the running of these firms because their profits on the 49 per cent will depend on it.

This policy which President Kaunda characterised as "Christian humanism" ensures against the growth of a Zambian capitalist class, as such a group will defeat the very objective of the national economy that is, providing greater share of wealth and opportunities for most of the population. It has been unequivocally stated that Zambian businessmen who reach a certain state, as yet unspecified, will be obliged to make shares available to the public through the new Zambian Stock Exchange. Others who grow still bigger will be taken over by the State.

Striking Contrast

Whether or not this slows down the pace of economic growth is unimportant in view of the fact that the increased GNP in which the common man has no share only widens the gap between the rich and the poor in Zambian society. Described as a "gamble" by vested interest, President Kaunda's policy reflects his determination to make the Zambian economy independent of the Whites whose counterparts in Rhodesia have been intransigent beyond the bounds of toleration. That four years since independence on October 24, 1964, Zambia is set on the road to self-reliance is, indeed, encouraging and a tribute to "one of the most sincere, decent and honourable leaders in today's world".

President Kenneth Kaunda presents a striking contrast to Dr Hastings Banda of Malawi who has done his best to ridicule the attempts of freedom fighters in southern Africa to liberate the African majority in White-minority racist regimes, by establishing diplomatic relations with South Africa. This misguided action has no doubt saved Malawi from treading the hazardous path of

self-discipline, but has encouraged the apartheid regime which now boasts of the success of its "outward going" policy.

The new road on which President Kaunda has set Zambia is of interest to India in more than one way. Though Zambia

stands separated by thousands of miles from India, President Kaunda has been following with great interest not only the events that took place here before independence but also after India became free. India's relations with Zambia are based on

identity of views on colonialism and neo-colonialism, on the racist regime in Rhodesia, arms race and the Vietnam war. This was revealed in the Communiqué issued at the conclusion of President Kaunda's State visit to India from June 14 to 18 last year.

LETTER FROM HONGKONG

Bonn Helps Mao

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THERE have been many recent indications about the formation of an as yet indivisible "Bonn-Peking axis".

This "axis" rests on what may be regarded as a realistic foundation: the foreign political and economic activities of Federal Germany and Continental China, and their increasing efforts to achieve a rapprochement. Despite the Cultural Revolution in China and the resulting stagnation in Peking's foreign trade, one can observe a rapid growth of China's economic ties with the Bonn Republic. According to West German figures, the volume of trade between the two countries has increased fourfold since 1963; it reached a total of 1,132.3 million marks in 1967. Chinese imports from Federal Germany comprised 826.1 million marks with exports running into 306.2 million marks.

As a result, Federal Germany now holds a leading place in Peking's trade with the free world, being second only to Japan. China on her part has moved into the second place (after Rumania) in Bonn's trade with the Communist bloc.

It is interesting to note that this rapid development of economic relations is taking place without any official or even semi-

official trade agreements between the two countries. Besides, in contrast to Britain, France and the Communist bloc countries Bonn does not have any official missions in Peking. Neither does it have any "non-governmental" representations in China of the type that Japan, Italy and Austria have.

At the close of 1967, West German newspapers noted with special satisfaction that the German export to China had increased for the preceeding nine months by 30 per cent on the 1966 total, and the aggregate trade turnover had exceeded one thousand million D.M. "It is a paradoxical miracle that the Federal Republic which unlike Great Britain or France does not maintain diplomatic relations with China, tops the list of European exporters to China", wrote *Die Welt* on December 6, 1967. According to this newspaper; the trade between the Federal Republic and China is allegedly carried on without any formal treaty. The economic relations between the two countries are affected neither by the Chinese Cultural Revolution nor by the war in Vietnam. Political experts in Bonn extensively speculate on the reasons which prompt the Chinese to give

preference to West German industrialists when placing orders for machinery to chemical products. *Die Welt* has drawn the conclusion that Peking's choice is influenced by sheer economic advantages.

MIT Expert

However a closer study of the economic relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and China reveals that a major portion of West German exports consists of equipment and instruments required for manufacturing rockets.

After successfully testing their A and H bombs, the Chinese have stepped up the development of delivery vehicle for the bombs. It is in this context the Chinese are known to be vigorously developing rocket technology as well as creating nuclear weapons. All this work is headed by the Director of the Institute of Mechanics of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chien Hsueh-shen, an eminent expert in aerodynamics and ballistics, who is regarded as the father of Chinese ballistic missile. Before coming to China Chien, who is a former MIT man, worked at a rocket engines laboratory and was employed by the US Navy Command in the capacity of a

consulting expert.

It was mainly on Chien Hsueh-shens' recommendations that the Chinese authorities have invited many foreign experts to work in China on developing rocket technology. In 1966 Peking invited a prominent West German engineer, Berthold Seliger, known for his research in the construction of medium-range missiles.

In the autumn of the same year Professor Pilz, an expert in rocket engineering, signed a contract to take part in the building of a missile base in China. Similar contracts, directly or indirectly connected with the rocket and nuclear industries, were concluded with a large number of other German specialists.

The Chinese offers are very attractive to the Germans, who are advanced a large sum of money in convertible currency. A considerable part of their pay is also in currency which is remitted to West German banks. During their stay in China the West German specialists are provided with attractive service and perquisites. Despite the chaos caused by the Cultural Revolution not a single German has ever been harassed by the Red Guards, while the diplomats and businessmen of all the other countries have been harassed and persecuted.

Bonn's Interest

Bonn on its part was also interested in rocket and nuclear co-operation with Peking, since the post-war Paris and Brussels agreements did not permit the Germans to engage in nuclear research on their territory, to say nothing of rocket and nuclear tests. That is why Chinese requests for skilled experts in the field of rocket engineering invariably meet with a favourable response in the Federal German Republic.

It is difficult to say who ultimately gains the most from such cooperation, the West Germans or the Chinese. However, China's progress in the sphere of rockets and missiles is undesirable. This can be seen from the decision taken by Peking in the summer of 1967

to form units of surface-to-surface attack missiles, and to modernize the equipment of the Chinese rocket-launching units stationed in Albania.

The close connections established between the Zeiss Works in Oberkochen, West Germany, where precision optical instruments are manufactured, and the Chinese rocket industry are of considerable interest. In October 1967 in Switzerland a Chinese delegation negotiated and concluded a new agreement which will be in force until 1970. According to the agreement, the Zeiss Works in Oberkochen will deliver to China more than 30 million D. M. worth of measuring instruments, sights, homing devices and other optical equipment, a major part of which is used in rocketry. As reported by the Chinese sources connected with West German manufactures in Hong Kong, taking part in the negotiations on the German side were the general manager of the Zeiss Works in Oberkochen Kahler, sales manager Kuhn as well as the general representative of the firm in Hong Kong, Jebson. According to the employees of the Feintechnik GmbH Oberkochen, (the firm which represents the Zeiss-Oberkochen in Hong-Kong, and which is headed by Jebson every month the Chinese receive several instrumental microscopes digitalisierte We Mi-Werkzeugmikroskope, 6 ABBE-horizontal gauges ABBE-Langerunesser waagerecht und senkrecht, 5 vertical gauges, 6 big optical heads grobe optische Ieilmopfe mit Nockenvellenprüfgerat-Grundbettlage (800 mm), which are used by the Chinese in the factories to build basic parts of their rockets. The new agreement concluded by the Zeiss-Oberkochen Works deals mainly with the supply of sights, periscopes, homing devices (V-Gerate-Verteidigungsgeräte—Periskope—Entfernungsmesser, die Geräte Multiprismat, Minomagic und das gesamte productions programm Feikmep). And the Chinese are not at all bothered by the fact that the instruments supplied bear the trademark of the Karl Zeiss enterprises, which is the trade mark of the products

manufactured at the famous Karl Zeiss factories in East Germany.

Apart from this agreement the Chinese place great hopes on the conclusion of their forth coming agreement with the Thyssen Concern (*Thyssen-Konzern*). This agreement provides for the supply of precision tubes (*Prazi-sionsrohre*) which are also used in the construction of rockets. Preliminary negotiations have already taken place and a delegation of the Thyssen Concern is going to visit Canton soon.

China spends great sums of foreign exchange and gold to develop her rocket industry. As far as is known, other NATO countries have not so far entered in such deals with China. And it is only with the assistance of West German industrialists that the Chinese increase their arsenal of offensive rockets. Here lies the explanation of the "paradoxical miracle" of West Germany being the most important European exporter to China and in the bargain testing at the same time new models of her own military equipment.

Trading Firms

In fact, the immense market potentiality of China has long attracted attention of commercial circles in the Federal Republic of Germany. The desires of the Federal Republic to broaden its trade relations with China and consolidate its positions in this part of the world meet all-around support of the Chinese side. Representatives of a number of West German trading firms, and above all the export firms "Spaeter", and "Mannesmann" (*Spaeter-Konzern*; *Mannesmann*, *Unabhängige Exportunternehmen*) are permanently stationed in China to maintain closer contacts with the trade authorities of the country.

What are the principles on which the German Federal Republic builds its relations with China?

First of all, the Federal Republic has so far succeeded in exploiting the present differences between China and the Socialist countries to solve her

own economic problems. West Germany has already taken some very active moves in this direction which meet with the approval of the ruling circles in China.

The expansion of trade with China to increase West German influence there and establish firm foothold on the vast internal market of China is invested with the utmost importance in Bonn. Even certain official pressures are applied to those West German trade representatives who underestimate the significance of this trade with China.

The ever-growing stream of West German investments into Chinese industry may actually be regarded as a means of dovetailing the Chinese economy into the mode of development suitable for West German monopolies.

New Treaty Talks

The Federal Republic is assigned a most important position after Japan in the trade balance of China. In turn West Germany has appreciation for her Chinese partner for reliability, liberal payments and absence of any political strings in commercial transactions. At present the Federal Republic and China are negotiating a treaty on long-term trade agreements. To create favourable conditions for the conclusion of this treaty, the Federal Republic, prompted by the considerations of political expediency, plays on the recent developments in China and gives every support to the cult of Mao Tse-tung and his policies. Every new development of the crisis in China is exploited by West German monopolies for the purposes of imposing on China such treaty provisions which would bring them additional advantages. Until the treaty is signed Bonn intends to maintain its cautious policy of broadening trade relations through both official and semi-official openings. Great significance is attached in this connection to all kinds of camouflage to conceal these relations in order to counter the growing discontent over the Bonn policies in China not only on the part of the socialist countries but also

on the part of some Western states and above all the USA.

Mercedes Deal

In the beginning of 1968 the Chinese started negotiations in Vienna with the automobile concern, the Mercedes, for the purchase of a whole lot of various transport vehicles. China is represented at the talks by Mr Ling, Commercial Counsellor at the Chinese mission in Austria, and the Mercedes concern is represented by - Mr Berndt. The Chinese side are reported to have stated to the representatives of the Mercedes that the proposed transaction would be very advantageous for the automobile concern and has given assurances that China generally has the intention of establishing closer links with the Mercedes concern and will subsequently make extensive purchases of its products on favourable terms.

Today there is not a single commodity formally placed on the embargo list which is not exported to China by West German firms, mainly by Hamburg companies. Before getting into China these goods are taken to Switzerland, Portugal or Spain under false papers made out in Switzerland.

In practice the procedure is as follows: the Chinese communicate their requirements as to the commodities which they need mainly for the war industry and which are on the embargo list, to four Swiss and German firms; these firms would place orders with other companies. The final formalities are gone through and control over the execution of the orders rests with a Swiss firm, Gretler and Co. of Zurich.

The Gretler and Co. has been in existence under this name for three generations. The father as well as the uncle of the present owner used to buy goods in China. So far the firm has been in this business for one hundred years. The firm has always been dealing in this commodity and is known in Switzerland as such. The whole company is a father-and-son affair. There is nobody else on its Zurich payroll.

In the beginning of the fifties,

the proprietor of the firm started selling to the Chinese, such goods as were on the embargo list. Uptil now all the activities of the firm connected with the illegal trade have been coming off smoothly except for one incident back in 1951 when the Belgian authorities confiscated American weapons destined for the Chinese forces stationed in North Korea. Though the incident was at the time extensively reported, the Gretler and Company was never mentioned in connection with it and until recently nothing has come out of the fact that it sponsored and executed this complex transaction which resulted in American weapons used against American soldiers.

The Gretler and Co. makes out all the necessary delivery, transit, customs and other documents for the American, German and British goods which are on the embargo list.

Hamburg Subsidiary

In Hamburg the interest of this firm are represented by Herr

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Burger who has in Hamburg a figure-head office under the name of Firma Fuhrmeister. In reality, this Firma Fuhrmeister belongs to the owners of the Gretler and Co. and Herr Burger, is in fact an employee of the Swiss firm.

Along with this Hamburg subsidiary, the Gretler and Co. has several more branch offices in other German cities where there are industries manufacturing chiefly electronic equipment.

Another Hamburg company, Erhard-Renken (address: Handelsfirma Continentale Produktionsgesellschaft Erhard-Renken, Hamburg II, Alter Wall 69) also prospers on the trade with China. Its annual turnover exceeds 100 million D.M. Its principal import from China consists of agricultural products. The management of the company has established excellent ties with the concerns which manufacture measuring instruments used in the production of nuclear weapons (radioactive radiation etc.), and has succeeded in placing and in executing Chinese orders. Being a commercial house the Erhard-Renken Company has considerable sums available in ready cash. Therefore it can do without going to banks and extends two-year credit to its Chinese customers.

Ayub As Go-Between

Today developments seem to be pointing to a direct dialogue between the leaders of Red China and Federal Germany. Acting through President Ayub Khan, Mao is believed to have informed Federal Chancellor Kiesinger of his desire to establish closer relations with Bonn. The recent Asian tour of Rainer Barzel, Chairman of the CDU-CSU faction, was with the objective of making a detailed acquaintance with the Chinese problem. Willy Brandt also sent another mission to Peking consisting of Deputy Chairman of the Social-Democratic Party faction in the Bundestag, Egon Franke, and two Social-Democratic Deputies, Karl Herold and Konrad Porzner.

Significant in this respect is an article carried by the *Bayern*

Kurier published by Franz Josef Strauss. In its issue of April 13, 1968, the newspaper frankly admits that on many major world problems Bonn has a much greater identity of views with Peking than with its NATO allies. The article expresses confidence that in Peking the Germans will meet with much greater understanding than they find today in Washington and London. The author assesses the beginning of direct political negotiations with China as a fresh impetus for FRG policy. In other words, what formerly was concealed is now being admitted quite openly.

Mandarin's Digit

With almost Mandarin cynicism, the old Mao seems to have discerned common interests which might serve as the basis

for this extraordinary alliance. On the one hand, one recalls the traditions of the "Middle Empire" which centuries back kept its neighbours in mortal fear and regarded all other nations as its vassals, on the other hand, there is the legacy of the outlook of Hitler's empire which subjugated practically all of Europe by fire and sword. It is not difficult by whip up such ultra-nationalist sentiments in these countries which at different periods of history were "great powers" that subsequently suffered physical and moral defeat. And it is precisely this bitterness of defeat and the dream of restoring their former grandeur that seem to lead these two countries, placed at two ends of the Eurasian continents, to seek common digit of understanding and alliance.

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Uncle Sam's Backyard

LAJPAT RAI

As early as 1829, Simon Bolivar the liberator of Latin America, could foresee the rise of the United States as an imperialist power: "The United States appears to be destined by Providence to plague Americas with misery in the name of liberty".

And so it soon proved to be. Hardly had the neighbouring Mexico gained her independence from Spain when the United States 'landseekers' swarmed across the borders, bringing Negro slaves with them despite the fact that slavery was outlawed in Mexico. Mexico's protests resulted only in the intruders proclaiming their own "republic" of Texas. When Mexico tried to enforce its authority, Texas was annexed by the US Government. In the short war that ensued a whole big chunk of territory from Texas to Californian coast was annexed. In the first twenty years of her independent existence Mexico lost half of her territory to the United States.

In 1854, to settle a minor argument, the US warships entered the Nicaraguan waters and bombarded San Juan, the Nicaraguan capital. In 1857, the US Marines entered the city once again and after a few short clashes forced the infamous Cassi-Iseiaric Treaty on the country which gave the Yankees full control on the Nicaraguan customs, the right to intervene in her internal affairs for maintaining "peace and order" and a

long strip of territory from Atlantic to the Pacific.

In 1860, the American Marines struck at Honduras and forced her to sign a treaty later to be known as the "Treaty of Shame".

In 1871, the US army occupied (for the first time) Santo Domingo, the capital of Dominican Republic in the name of protecting the lives of US citizens and maintaining "peace and order" on the 'Island of disturbance and evil'.

In 1881, the US Marines helped Peru against Chile in exchange for the port of Chinbote where it constructed a naval base.

The list is too long to be fully enumerated. The 19th century was the century of the Big Stick policy of the United States towards Latin America—a policy of open aggression and uncalled for intervention of humiliation of the Latin American peoples and trampling upon their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In 1884, the US Secretary of State Richard Olney could declare to the world:

"The United States has proclaimed itself the protector of the western world, in which she is by far the strongest power. Today the United States is practically sovereign over the entire Latin American continent and her fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its inter-position".

The 19th century was also the century of what was ephemerically called the "Manifest Destiny". A new generation of expansionists was speaking out in the United States for the

fulfilment of this American destiny as an imperialist power ruling not only the North America but also the South American continent. The spirit of this 'destiny' of a rising imperialist power in the western hemisphere was expressed in the notorious work of a priest J. Strong, a book entitled "Our Country" which became the Bible of the expansionists. Wrote the reverend father:

"It seems to me that God, with infinite wisdom and skill, is training the Anglo-Saxon race for an hour sure to come in the future of the world. If I read not amiss, this powerful race inhabiting our States in Union will move down upon Mexico, down upon Central and South America, out upon the islands of the sea, over Africa and beyond. And can anyone doubt that the result of this competition of races will be the 'survival of the fittest'?"

Near the close of the century after a phoney war with Spain, the United States annexed Puerto Rico and set up Cuba as a phoney republic controlled from Washington through the Platt Amendment.

In 1903, Theodore Roosevelt, that great exponent of 'Manifest Destiny' succeeded in dismembering the Colombian republic, took possession of a long strip of the Isthmus of Panama where the future Panama canal was to be built by an American company, and boasted "I took the canal. They raved and protested, invoked gods and devils; but I took away what was ours".

By 'they' he meant the people

The first article of this series appeared in last week's Mainstream (October 5, 1968).

of Colombia and what was "ours" was a whole province of the Colombian republic forcibly snatched and carved into a puppeted republic of Panama under US protectorate.

In 1904, Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed his infamous "Roosevelt Corollary," to Monroe Doctrine, under which the United States assumed the unilateral right to police the whole Latin American continent. The Corollary in part stated:

"Chronic wrong doing or impotence leading to loosening of ties of civilized society in Latin America ultimately require intervention of some civilized nation, and in this Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States to the exercise of her right though unwillingly (*sic*) of an international police power".

Such is the history of US-Latin American relations in the 19th and the early 20th centuries which Smt Indira Gandhi must be acquainted with if she remembered her father's *Glimpses of the World History* or if a knowledgeable official in the Ministry of External Affairs had prepared a background paper for her benefit, during her current tour of Latin America.

But the Big Stick Policy was only one arm of the total and general policy of American imperialism towards Latin America. Moreover, it was an unpopular policy which aroused anger and resentment from the Latin American people since it was based on open aggression military intervention in the affairs of Latin nations. The second arm of the policy was economic penetration through investment of large sums of capital, grant of loans etc. and through it the control over the political life of the Latin American nations, which Nehru described as economic imperialism. Its modern name is neo-colonialism. In fact, Latin America is the region where the neo-colonial techniques were first tried and tested—techniques, later to be employed by other imperialist powers in Asia and Africa in the period after the Second World War when the avalanche

of liberation struggles swept over these two continents, bringing to an end the sordid chapter of direct colonial rule.

The history of foreign investments in Latin America begins in the second half of the 19th century. During this period Britain, France and Germany were the main capital exporting nations to the Latin American continent. Before 1890, the United States investments in this region were negligible and were mainly confined to risky gold-mining ventures, rail-roads and public utilities. But beginning with the First World War, US capital inflow into Latin America increased at a terrific rate ousting the British, French and German companies from their vantage positions; and by 1950, occupying all commanding heights in the economies of the most countries of the Continent.

According to the data supplied by the US Department of Commerce by 1962 the total US private direct investments in Latin America came to a little over 13000 dollars. The figures for 1965 were 17,000 dollars, and for 1967 19,5000 dollars.

The breakdown of the 1962 data as supplied by the US Department of Commerce, shows the following sector by sector distribution:

Sector	Investments in dollars
Agriculture & allied pursuits	— 4,535 million
Mining & Metal working	— 1,190 "
Petroleum	— 3,194 "
Manufacturing	— 2,103 "
Public Utilities	— 750 "
Trade	— 892 "
Miscellaneous	— 500 "

Thus out of a total investment of 13000 millions dollars, a mere 2103 dollars are invested in industry and that too mainly the light consumer goods industry. The main bulk is in agriculture, extracting industries and public utilities and trade—a typical colonial investment pattern.

Through these investments, the United States controlled and still controls the economies of the most Latin American countries to the extent not known outside the region. A typical exam-

ple of this stranglehold was the Cuban economy before the revolution of 1959. In 1958 the US companies owned 80 percent of the Cuban public utilities including railways; 90 per cent of mining; 100 per cent (together with Royal Dutch Shell) of oil refining and distribution; 80 percent of sugar production; and controlled 62 percent of the total bank deposits of the country. Apart from this US capital occupied an important position in agriculture, (60 percent of all sugar land was controlled or owned by US companies and cartels), manufacturing, hotel business, gambling casinos, tourism, real estate etc. Over 70 percent of the capital invested in tourism was American capital.

As in Cuba so in most of the General American and South American countries, the American capital occupied all the strategic positions in their economies, reducing them virtually to so many appendages of the economy of the United States.

Much has been written about the "developmental" role of American capital in Latin America by the hack economists of the United States and not a few from Latin American countries themselves. But in reality all foreign capital emanating from imperialist countries has only one role to play, that is, exploitative, and American capital in Latin America is no exception.

According to the 1955 Report of the ECLA (Economic Commission for Latin America) on state of Latin American economies, over 60 percent of the post-war investments in the region were actually reinvested profits and only 33 percent represented fresh money brought in from abroad. According to the Report, over 1500 million dollars in profits are siphoned out of Latin America every year. Indicative in this respect are figures from Mexico during the period 1945-60: Foreign investors made a profit of 813.7 million dollars of which 792 million dollars were taken out of the country. This is what the *Newsweek's* economic correspondent for Latin America wrote in the issue of March 30, 1964:

"From 1950 to 1961, Latin America received 23.4 billion dollars from abroad, mainly from the United States. But in the same period it paid out overseas 13.4 billion dollars in debt-financing, profits and dividends and suffered 10 billion dollars in trade deficits. The result is a net financial loss of 500 million dollars. *As a result it is Latin America which is exporting capital to the United States and as this export is not due to any increase in the Latin American savings, the effect is that of decapitalisation of Latin America.*"

Moreover, US capital earns the highest profits in Latin America compared to other regions of the world in which it has made in-roads. The US Department of Commerce report for 1958 carries the following table:

Average Rate of Profits in US Corporate Investment Abroad

Region	1948	1953	1956
Europe	7.6	9.6	8.9
Canada	14.7	13.9	13.0
Latin America	17.4	22.9	27.1

Victor Perlo, a US Marxist economist, commenting on the exploitation of Latin America by the United States writes picturesquely:

"Latin America remains the richest foreign preserve of American imperialism. Of the 7.5 billion dollars annual booty that it receives, at least 2.5 billion dollars come from Latin America

—a tribute equivalent to each fifth of corn raised by the Latin American peasants, each fifth bale of cloth produced by Latin American workers, each fifth pound of metal drawn by Latin American miners. One doubts whether any Roman emperor ever obtained such tribute from his conquered peoples."—(*American Imperialism* 1962 p 110).

But American neo-colonialism does not stop at fleecing the people and draining away their wealth. It also curtails their sovereignty and reduces their freedom to a sheer mockery.

According to Salvador Madaraga, a conservative and generally a pro-American statesman and writer, American companies in Latin America are "States within States" and "in some cases act as de facto government". It is well known that the United Fruit Company actually runs the tiny central American states, known as the "banana republics". Madaraga writing about the role of US capital in his latest book *Latin America—Between Eagle and the Bear* 1962 comments:

"In one word, the United States wields more sovereignty over a number of Latin American nations than over some of her own capitalist enterprises—These companies with billions of dollars to back them are strong enough to overwhelm the weak sovereignty of the Latin American states, which lie prostrate before the

power of capital—a power of a modern giant".

Jawaharlal Nehru was thus not wrong in calling Latin America an American backyard, an American empire. And this is an empire in the truest sense of the word, though each Latin American nation is free on the map and has all the formal trappings of a free nation.

But the people of Latin America no longer lie prostrate before the power of capital. They are up in arms to liberate themselves from this neo-colonial yoke, this modern slavery, which has been imposed on them by North American imperialism. Already one country Cuba has broken away from this invisible empire creating the first "free territory of Latin America" "in the Western hemisphere, a territory free from American companies, American influence and American power.

For the rest the struggle for national liberation continues—a struggle against neo-colonialism, which has become part of the similar struggle of the peoples of Asia and Africa, giving rise to the unity and solidarity of the peoples of the Third World. And on its outcome is going to depend the future of whole mankind.

In our next article we shall deal with the national liberation struggle of the Latin American people.

(To Be Concluded Next Week)

STERLING IN DOLDRUMS

Another False Dawn ?

SARAL PATRA

A SINGLE swallow does not make a summer, nor can a drowning man save himself by holding on to a straw. But the British official thinking would have the world believe otherwise on the strength of a comparatively

improved balance of trade position in August. Already the improvement in exports and fall in imports in August are being presented as marking "substantial shifts".

The idea apparently is to

assure both domestic and external critics that the pound is gaining in strength. As a token of this, the Bank rate was cut by a half point to 7 per cent.

No doubt, the trade gap fell from £81 million in July to £30

million, the smallest for the last twelve months. But, there is as yet no indication that this performance will be sustained. The rise in exports in August was mainly due to a sharp increase in imports by the United States, threatened with a dockers strike on the Atlantic coast. Even if a strike is averted there, it is doubtful if the American importers would be ready to oblige the British shippers to that extent for a number of consecutive months, which alone would make for a stabilisation in the British trade balances. The increased US imports from Britain was evidently to stockpile supplies, much of which was Scotch whisky. With the stocks in hand, the Americans are not expected to place orders of the same value again now.

Yet another danger looming large in that area is the incessant talk of a recession overtaking US economy in the near future. The debate in the US on this score is still going on. While a set of experts will not hesitate to warn about its close proximity, another set of professors refuse to concede its accelerated approach. In any case, the intensity of the public debate over the coming recession is bound to create some uncertainty, and, to that extent, a slump in British exports to the United States is quite on the cards.

Main Worry

The fact remains that despite the improvement marked in August, imports still continue to be their main worry. From March to August this year, they averaged £645 million a month, which was 24 percent higher in value than in last summer.

The seasonally adjusted balance of payments position for the first two quarters of 1968 amply proves the gravity of the situation. While the "invisibles" recorded a much higher surplus at £81 million in the second quarter compared to £47 million in the first, trade deficit increased from £192 million to £219 million during the same period. The combined deficit on current account went up by £1,000,000 to £169 million in the

second quarter over that of the first.

A more intractable factor adding to the difficulties of the British economy, is the huge unemployment figures, raising the July figure by 46,000 to make a grand total of 561,000 for August. Although there has been a marginal fall in the number of wholly unemployed in September, the burden remains acute, since further seasonal unemployment is sure to come during the winter months.

A Classic Situation

With the trade unions voting against the wage freeze policy, Mr Wilson's Government will be faced with a new problem. A rise in wage bill (refusal to do so will certainly be resisted with work stoppages) will add to the present cost of production. And with the industrialists and producers keen on maintaining their margin of profit, the export prices of British goods could not be pitched at the level attractive to overseas buyers without a substantial increase in the direct or indirect Government subsidies.

Thus, a classical situation, with an acute balance of payments deficit and rising unemployment, exists in Britain for a devaluation of the pound. But the dilemma for Britain is that the classics do not provide a ready-made formula on what to do when the currency has already been devalued once. It is not difficult for any one to realise that a second devaluation under these circumstances will lead to further inflation and a worsening of the balance of payments position owing to a sharp rise in import prices.

A new threat to pound sterling appears from the European continent where, according to knowledgeable experts, devaluation of the Franc is imminent. In other words, it will exert heavy pressure on British exports. Although West German experts have assured against such a possibility, because it will not fit in with the framework of the Common Market, Britain can only hope for the best.

One way out suggested by a

section of British economists is to enforce drastic import restrictions. The controls over imports, it is felt, would work out quickly to match them with export performance. However, this opens up British exports to the danger of a retaliatory action by the United States where protectionists abound in no small number. But this danger of retaliation may not materialise because the US Congress would have been in recess by early October. Moreover, import controls are permissible under the GATT and the EFTA agreements.

The other is to get some of the European countries to effect an upward revision of their exchange rates. *Sunday Times* considers it the "best solution", for "this would solve many problems besides our own: the threat of French devaluation would be removed, the American payments deficit would be reduced, as would those of many other countries too." It suggests revaluation of the currencies of West Germany, Holland, Switzerland, and possibly that of Italy.

International Goodwill

According to this line of thought, both import controls and revaluation of these currencies would benefit British firms—the former by way of gains to those operating in the home market, and in case of the latter, the gainers would be the firms faced with European continental competition; in either case there will be a big boost to employment in Britain. But if import controls were to be enforced, exports of these countries to Britain would be hurt exceedingly.

In sum, the future of the British pound sterling now rests on international action, more realistically speaking, on international goodwill. The recent Basle stand-by credit of \$2,000 million to underwrite the sterling balances held by Britain, has undoubtedly come extremely handy. The credits will be drawn on to help offset withdrawals of sterling deposits in London both by foreign official and private holders in the overseas sterling area.

Here, too, as the situation has developed, the cushion may not be of long-term benefit. Of the two big Commonwealth countries, Canada is already out of the sterling area, and Australia is busy devising ways to enter the "Group of Ten" which decides the future monetary policies of the Western world. They have little

interest in forging a close-knit sterling club that would work under a self-imposed restraint on drawing down sterling balances.

Britain would, thus, need continued international goodwill, and in ample measure, to be in a position to weather the coming storm. There is little meaning

in gloating over the chance gains made in August. As the *Economist* (London) said, "the lift given to British morale by August's rather unexpectedly good trade figures will prove to be just another very temporary escape from yet another period of darkness preceding yet another false dawn."

Communications

LESSONS OF PRESS STRIKE

SRI Mohan Ram's letter on the "Lessons of the Press Strike" (*Mainstream*, Oct. 5) reads like fiction but it seems to me that it is fiction with a purpose. His central theme is that the IFWJ leadership under the control of the CPI has sabotaged the newspaper strike to serve the interests of the "left of centre" government of Indira Gandhi.

What exactly was the IFWJ's role? Sri Mohan Ram says that it was "not very serious" about the strike in the beginning. It is common knowledge that the IFWJ was not a party to the indefinite strike unlike the token one-day strike of January 24 and the April 23 strike which also lasted a single day. There was no joint call by the AINEF and the IFWJ for the July 23 strike action. One exception was the *Times of India* group of papers where its own composite union of journalists and non-journalists made it joint.

In other establishments, the IFWJ directed its members to go on strike in sympathy, for the statutory wage award for working journalists, which is non-negotiable, was no issue at all in the July 23 strike. It is, therefore, misleading to say that the

IFWJ was not very serious about the strike.

Sri Mohan Ram then goes on to say that the journalists in the three classes of newspapers really did not get themselves involved in the struggle and that the IFWJ did not represent the journalists in the strike-bound papers "though it might have a following" in the papers not affected by it. In other words, Sri Ram says that the strike went on for 57 days despite the journalists. If journalists were of no consequence, what tortuous logic is it to say that the IFWJ which does not represent them, according to Sri Mohan Ram, broke the strike?

And how was it broken? He says that at one stage the Government wanted to issue an ordinance to make the non-journalists' award statutorily binding, that the proprietors were very nervy but the Government changed its mind when it saw the IFWJ in a "strike-breaking" mood. That the Government wanted to issue an ordinance is an absolute fib. This is news to the IFWJ and I am inclined to treat it as one of the usual scoops.

And when negotiations (not

started by the IFWJ) reached a stalemate, says Sri Ram, the only course was to extend the strike to all newspapers and news agencies but it could not be done, thanks to the alleged disloyalty of the IFWJ leadership. Sri Ram should know, like everybody else, that the employees in the two principal news agencies have their own organisations. The complete strike in the news agencies on January 24 was not at the dictates of the IFWJ or the AINEF but because of their independent decisions for joint and coordinated action.

In this context it is note-

NEXT WEEK

DISCUSSION

on

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Because of lack of space, the current discussion on Czechoslovakia could not be accommodated in this issue. Next week's Mainstream will carry at least eight pages focussing different points of view on the Czechoslovak crisis.

worthy that the one-day sympathetic strike in the excluded categories of papers and news agencies on July 29 was only a partial success. Non-journalists in very many papers, leave alone the journalists who are saddled with a "petit-bourgeois" leadership, did not come out, notwithstanding the AINEF call. The simple fact which paper revolutionaries like my friend forget is that even an influential organisation like the AINEF has a long way to go before it can organise the newspaper employees in all the States.

This is one of the reasons, I presume, why the AINEF leadership called the strike only in big newspaper establishments in Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta, where it is organisationally strong. I say "presume" because the AINEF decision to restrict the strike was not taken in consultation with the IFWJ.

As for Sri Mohan Ram's charge of CPI stranglehold over the IFWJ, Sri Chittaranjan has already pointed out in the last issue (*Mainstream*, Oct. 5) that the IFWJ President, Sri Bhushan Rao, does not belong to any political party. Or, is it that Sri Ram is giving ideas to the Jains of the *Times of India* chain of newspapers that Sri Rao is a CPI man? Sri S. B. Kolpe, Secretary-General, has also been identified by Sri Chittaranjan as a non-CPI man. And it was these two functionaries of the IFWJ who were actively associated with the AINEF leadership at every stage of the strike. All that I wish to add on this question of political complexion is that it has been the exclusive privilege of either reactionaries or Press Club revolutionaries to have plum jobs in newspapers owned by tycoons, whether they are from Rajasthan or Tamil Nadu. CPI men had to content themselves with the marginal Left press. And, pray, how many ultra-revolutionaries keep their teleprinter backyards clean?

I have said in the beginning that Sri Mohan Ram's communication is a fiction with a purpose. The purpose is diabolical as is seen elsewhere in its

text. He waxes indignant, that if the IFWJ cannot be freed from what he imagines to be CPI control, "working journalists would be constrained to think of a new organisation."

This is indeed what has been happening in some places. Sri Ram may not be unaware of what is claimed to be a parallel organisation in UP which was set up at a conference inaugurated by Sri Morarji Desai. Similarly, in Hyderabad, a bunch of journalists who unashamedly gave evidence against a colleague in the Thimma Reddy episode has formed a guild in opposition to the IFWJ unit. In Madras also there have been attempts in that direction.

These splitting activities are taking place not because of the mythical CPI control but the surviving relics of anti-trade unionists among journalists—patronised by employers and some of the State Governments—are getting frightened of the new accent in the IFWJ strategy on collaboration between the two major elements in the newspaper industry, namely, the working journalist and newspaper worker. It is no surprise to me that on starting rival organisations the Gaya Rams converge whatever their political affiliations.

It will be foolish to believe that Sri Mohan Ram is only against the CPI which is supposed

to be dominating the IFWJ. He does not spare the AINEF either, which is led by Sri Kolhatkar of the CPI (M). He pontificates that "the leadership (of the AINEF) was content to survive from one banal stance to another, inventing new arguments."

This should be an eye-opener to all those who are genuinely interested in the trade union movement in the newspaper industry. What he is up to is disruption by confusing the bulk of the newspaper employees who do not owe allegiance to any political party.

This becomes clear from two other passages in his letter. First, he is one with *Organiser* and *Indian Monitor* in arguing that *Patriot* and *National Herald* in Delhi should have been frozen during the strike.

Second, see the lingo he has used referring to the IFWJ: "a section of the leadership (which includes known card-holders of the CPI and fellow travellers) has tried to convert..." There is no need to labour the point, for these are patented expressions. It is not necessary either to identify the patent-holder. Could it be only a hangover of Sri Mohan Ram's connection with the Press Institute of India, a CIA-financed organisation, when he speaks of "clandestine contact?" How I wish it is only a hangover!

New Delhi

—A. Raghavan

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The Precursing Extremist

THE EXTREMIST CHALLENGE. India between 1890 and 1910 by AMALES TRIPATHI

(Orient Longmans, 1967, pp. xv+246, Rs. 10)

THE essence of historical method lies in recognising the totality of human life both in regard to individuals and communities. Dr Tripathi realises this and undertakes a comprehensive study of what on the surface seems merely a political phenomenon. His is the first full-length work on the emergence of extremism in Indian politics which, variously described as new nationalism, religious nationalism or extremism, in reality was the manifestation of a new psychology in India.

After an introductory survey of the Hindu responses to the Western challenge in the early nineteenth century, Dr Tripathi studies the thought of the spiritual mentors of the new nationalism—Dayananda, Bankim and Vivekananda—who prepared its ideological background. While analysing the nature and extent of their influence, Dr Tripathi also shows that in certain respects their ideas were misunderstood or narrowly interpreted by the extremists. Lest the delineation of the ideological environment should be incomplete, he also discusses the role of religion and history, in the creation of extremist psychology. Tilak, he points out, was the first to forge an alliance between revolutionary politics and religion.

It was, however, the political background that charged the ideological factors with real potency. The visible failure of constitutional agitation underscored the necessity of an efficacious alternative. The partition

of Bengal precipitated the adoption of new means which took the form of boycott, swadeshi and national education. Dr Tripathi gives a detailed account of these events. But he has no illusions about the achievements of the extremists. Their economic thought was not original and they could make no appreciable impact on the people. Unable to appreciate the thoughts and feelings of the people—real men and women—the extremists invented in their minds an idealised people and waited for them to rise. That in spite of his admiration for the extremists Dr Tripathi has been able to detect their weakness is a measure of his success as a historian.

Yet this useful work has a serious drawback. It views everything from the point of its effect on the growth of extremism. To an extent Dr Tripathi is justified in adopting this approach. His subject is the extremist challenge and as such his concern should have been with everything that affected it. Which is what Dr Tripathi has done. However, he has overlooked an essential principle of historical research. Facts are the raw material of history. But facts are not absolute. The facts, for example, of the historian of administration may not be the facts of, say, the historian of public opinion. If the former wishes to pass a judgment on public opinion he cannot do so simply on the basis of the first category of facts without disturbing his perspective. Dr Tripathi has permitted his vision

to be thus warped. His whole treatment of the Muslim politics during the period betrays this. He does not realise that the partition of Bengal was welcomed by the Muslims there. He is content with referring to Nawab Atiqullah's speech at the 1906 Congress and to the fact that Abdul Rasul and Liakat Hussain had marched with the Hindus in protest against the partition. He ignores the vital question whether these persons represented their community. This is understandable in a man who accepts the discredited hypothesis that the Muslim League was "a got-up affair." Similarly, his remarks on Sir Syed Ahmad Khan are not only unnecessary and specious but also untenable.

Finally, Dr Tripathi may do well to scrutinise carefully the chronological and historical validity of his assertion that 'Hindu chauvinism was a reaction to Muslim chauvinism, born of the Wahabi movement and bred in the Aligarh school' (p. 17). In fact, his own observations on pp. 68-69 and 145-146 of the book do not bear this out.

The present work is an authentic account of a significant phase of the Indian national movement. But his comments on official policy and Muslim politics—to which chapters have been devoted—need to be taken with caution. Only if Dr Tripathi had refrained from passing judgments on these matters without analysing them independent of their bearing on extremism, his work would have gained in depth and perspective.

S. C.

Spotlight on Western Designs¹

FOREIGN INTRIGUE AGAINST INDIA by B. R. Vats (Aman Publishers, New Delhi, 1967, Rs 30)

THE author, a well-known journalist posted for some years now in Moscow, has made the mistake, inspite of his many visits and now fairly prolonged stay abroad, of not having his book published, most preferably of all, in London. For in spite of independence, what Mahatma Gandhi called our "slave mentality" persists in many forms, and little impact is made by books, howsoever good, with an Indian imprimatur on India's reading public. We rave not only over anything written by Louis Fischer or Vincent Sheean. That, after all, is understandable, but any Whiteman writing on an Indian theme generally gets a more respected hearing in India than almost any Indian. One is driven to these unpleasant thoughts as one dips into the valuable book that Sri Vats has written, and angrily asks why it should be practically unnoticed in the writer's own country.

Foreign Intrigue against India is the work of a busy journalist, but Sri Vats' survey shows that he has done a good deal of wisely selective research, concentrating on essentials rather than on the incidental material which is the undoing of much pretentious scholarship. His coverage of the period 1857-1947, thus, is illuminating. The entire background to Britain's parting kick at India by way of partition of the country is ably summed up.

The writer then proceeds to show on the basis of facts how sustained efforts have continued since in order to undermine India's independence. Even Jawaharlal Nehru, with his meticulous international manners was constrained to say once that certain Western powers practised "deliberate hostility to India" and that over basic issues like Kashmir and Goa, Britain and the USA were "invariably against India". The leopard does not,

indeed, change his spots and imperialism, somewhat shorn of its fangs, still rues the loss. As a Communist member said sometime back in the Indian Parliament—and so gracious and sedate a person as Srimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit echoed him—Britain has never yet forgiven us our freedom. No wonder that expecting Pakistan to be a malleable instrument (which India, whatever the designs of reactionaries, can never really be), Britain and the USA have taken the lead in feeding Pakistan with all the wherewithal of an incessant conflict with India. The aid and abetment which the West gave to Pakistan in its sallies against India in 1947 and 1965 is exposed and analysed and the lessons from the events formulated extremely capably by Sri Vats.

Hardly anywhere else can one find such an intimate day-to-day picture of the meeting between Premier Lal Bahadur Shastri and President Ayub Khan at Tashkent, where, under the friendly auspices of their Soviet hosts, they pledged either country to the renunciation of force for settlement of mutual problems. Sri Vats gives a moving picture in the form of a simple day-to-day record which because indeed of its effortless objectivity, is extraordinarily effective.

Inevitably, an account of the book's theme being what it is, the Kashmir problem is discussed in some detail. To foreign intrigue against India over Kashmir and whatever else, the Chinese animosity towards this country has added a new and peculiar dimension. Sri Vats brings this out very well, but while his stress naturally is on expanding how the foreign machinations have aimed at perpetuating the "problem", his discussion is somewhat unsatisfying because of there being in the book no indication of

an imaginative line which could conceivably be pursued by India in order to solve problems which have accumulated in spite of ourselves out of objective conditions before and after independence—problems which cannot be wished away merely by our appearing to be the injured party. The reviewer's expectation was that having been able to have a view of India's "problems" from the grand-stand of world affairs, where Sri Vats has had a seat for some years now, he could perhaps have said something also of the mote in India's eye and suggested ways and means, necessarily difficult, to correct the deficiency.

Sri Vats' style is pleasant, and one can read this book of nearly three hundred packed pages almost at a sitting. One can cavil at some glib formulation regarding phases of our struggle for freedom, but there is no denying that in essentials he is on the right track and from time to time, especially over the background to Partition and the Kashmir imbroglio, Sri Vats brings out little known points, which throw a flood of light on devious questions.

The jacket on the book is a significant illustration of the psychology behind foreign intrigue against India. It shows, in a remarkable photograph, the gaping scars on Kashmiri Gate, a noble example of Mughal city architecture which British troops retiring from the scene in 1857 had damaged with canon fire. This act of gratuitous vandalism is typical of all that has followed since. It is good that Sri Vats has in this way reminded the reader vividly of 1857 and stressed that the story of India's struggle from 1857 to 1947 is linked up with her strivings for the maintenance and consolidation of her independence.

Hiren Mukerjee

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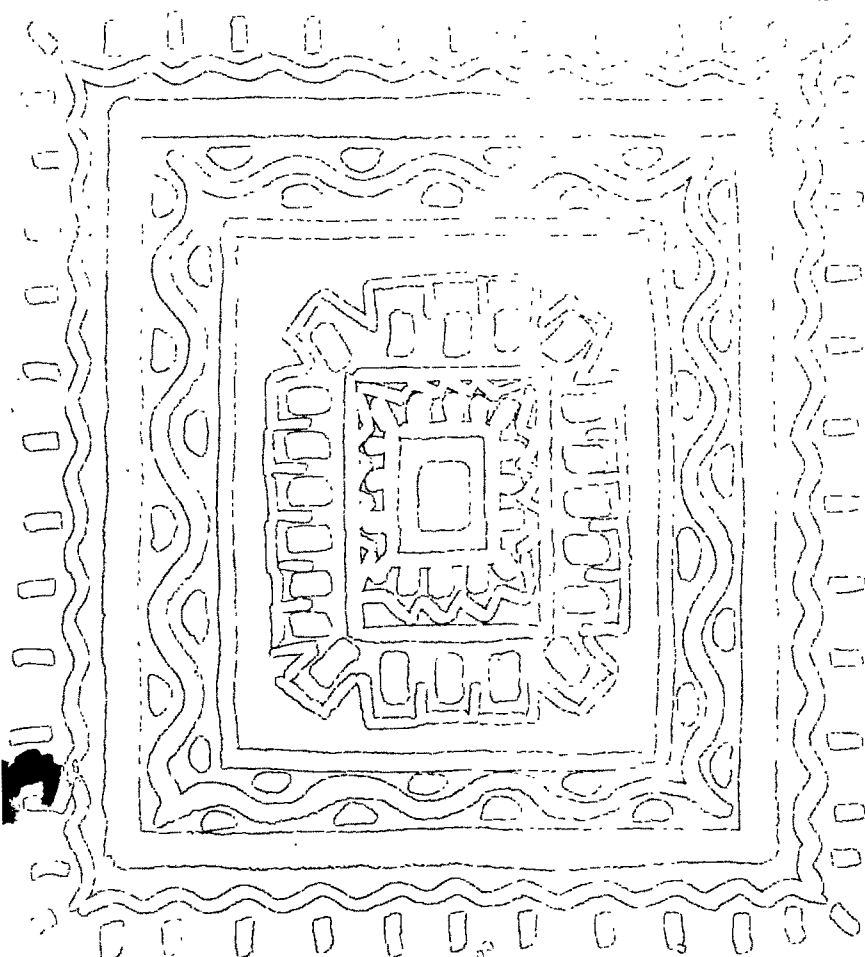
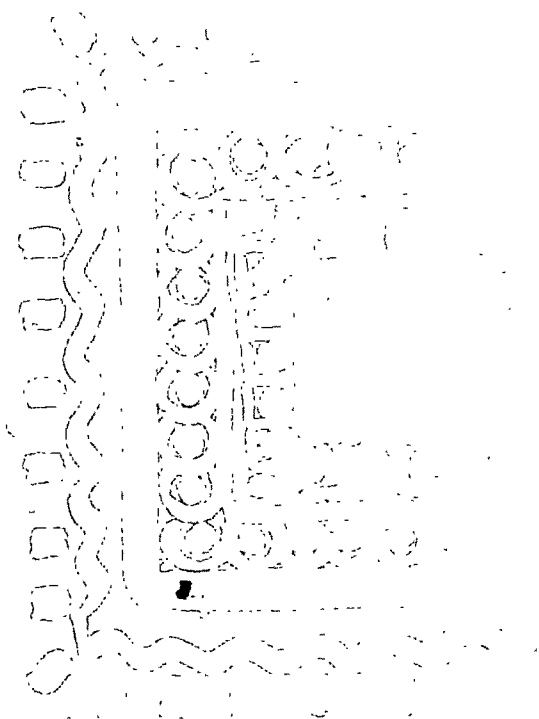
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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1968

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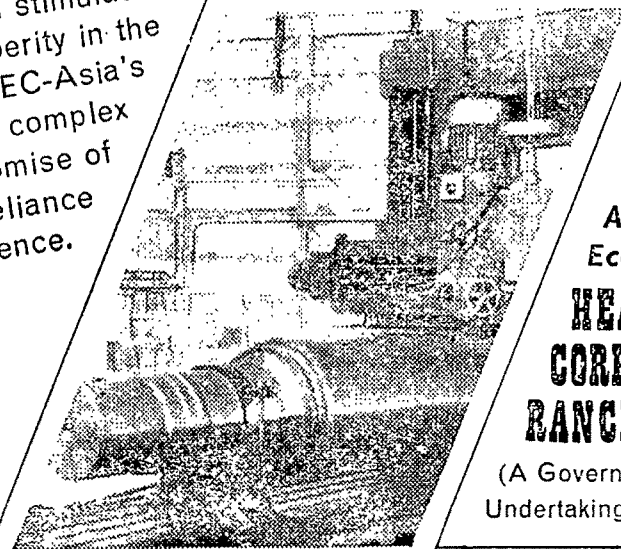
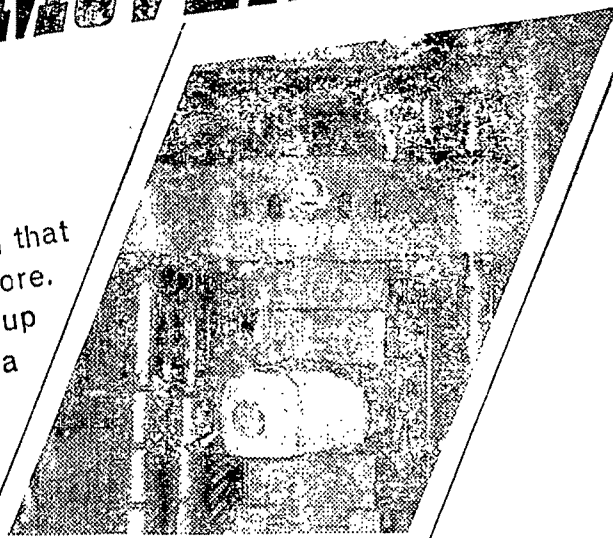
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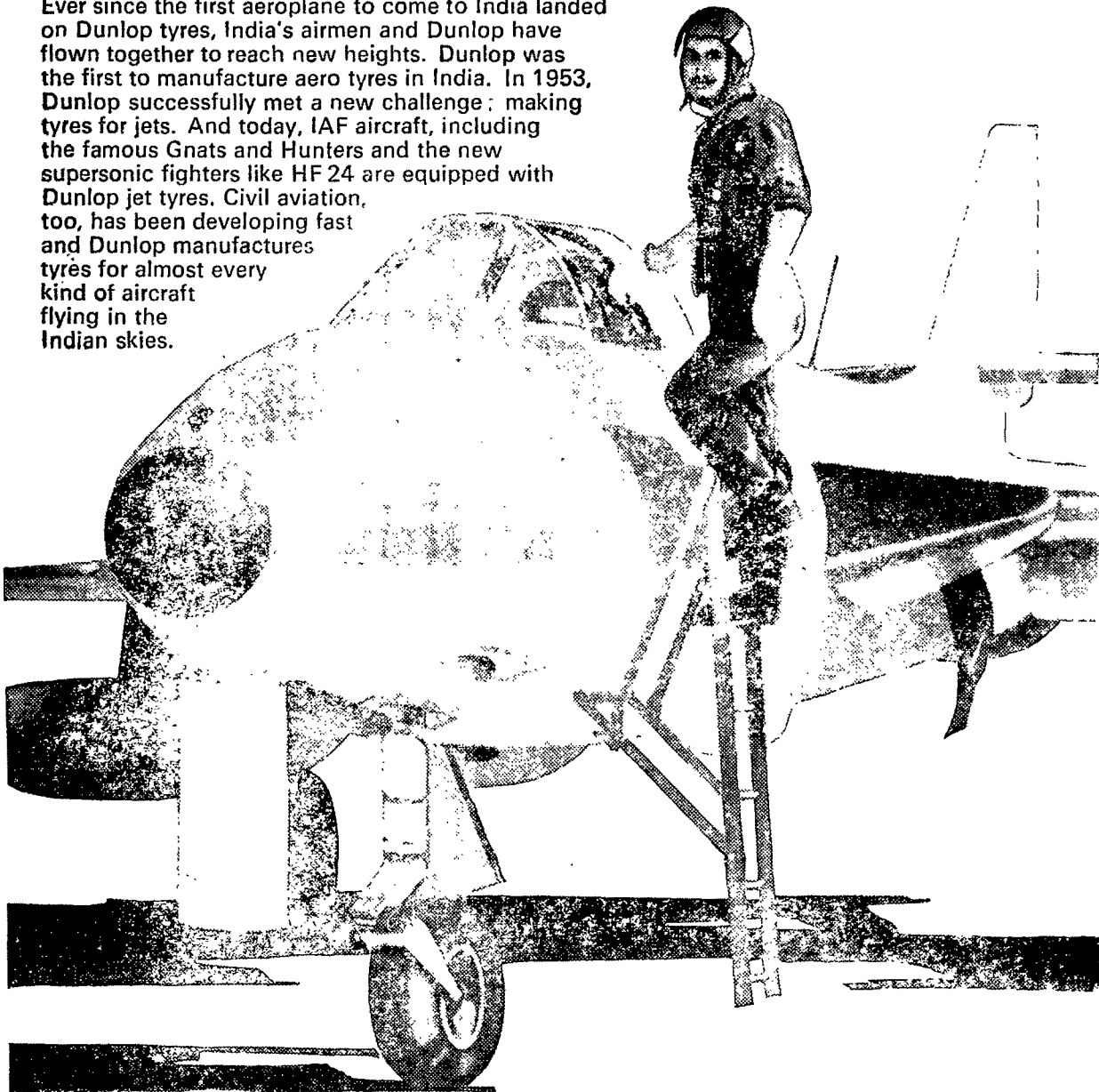
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BASIC ISSUES REMAIN

THE tension caused by the Union Government's handling of the demands of its employees and their one day token strike was such that the sense of relief that prevails following the understanding reached last week is quite understandable.

But it would be naive to imagine that the "gesture" of the Government or the acceptance of it by the employees has removed any of the causes that led to the friction between them in the first place. As in all cases where the authorities wield the big stick and take recourse to securing and using extraordinary powers, the issues that had to be settled immediately became very different from the ones with which the employees had begun their agitation. In the heat created by large-scale victimisation the questions of need-based minimum wage, merger of DA with basic pay and full neutralisation of the rise in the cost of living were inevitably pushed to the background. The "gesture" of the Government has only been a minimisation of the scope and extent of victimisation. The employees' leaders agreed to consider this satisfactory for the moment presumably because they felt that in the new situation the first requirement was the restoration of the kind of atmosphere in which a meaningful dialogue on the real issues can take place. The question is whether the authorities are yet in a mood to follow up their much-advertised gesture with moves for cordial negotiations on these basic questions, aimed at a fair settlement that can satisfy both sides.

No one who has followed the events of the past month can possibly agree that the Government acted with grace or generosity. The sweeping Ordinances issued in mid-September bore no relation to the handling of the problems thrown up by the proposed one day token strike. The description of the token strike as a "rehearsal" for something very sinister was no more than cheap propaganda meant to justify the draconian measures resorted to by the Government to terrorise the employees. Having let the police loose on the employees at several centres well in advance of the day of strike, and having resorted to steps like preventive arrests of union leaders, the Government and its propaganda agencies, mainly All India Radio, tried to keep up the pretence that the token strike had collapsed. Mushroom unions long dead were resurrected to create the impression on the public mind that vast numbers of employees were not in favour of the token strike; strike-breaking organisations received the maximum publicity. But the people who come in contact with the administration at several points could see for themselves that the administration was virtually paralysed in several sectors.

By their subsequent strong-arm tactics against the participants in the one-day action the authorities themselves furnished proof that the strike was not the kind of failure they had painted it to be. The repression let loose on the employees had its inevitable effect on those who were back at their jobs, and the total failure of the herculean efforts to restore "normalcy" in the posts and telegraphs system without taking back the victimised men showed that the rulers did not even understand what they were doing. The fact that even "loyal" employees who reported for duty on September 19, as in the case of Indraprastha Bhavan, were driven to defiance, brought out clearly the lack of comprehension of the situation on the part of the Government.

There is no doubt that the Government thought that the employees could be terrorised into meek obedience; otherwise, well before the token strike was to materialise the Central Ministers could have started sincere negotiations on the issues raised and arrived at a satisfactory settlement. The haste with which the Ordinances were promulgated and the police force was mobilised all over the country made it clear enough that the rulers at the Centre were quite convinced that lathis, teargas and bullets could put the employees in their place. They forgot Gandhiji's teaching that violence solves no problems but only creates new and bigger ones; in this instance resort to force did create many problems the likelihood of which the Central Ministers had totally failed to take into account. While the employees had thought in terms of stopping work for only 24 hours, the administrators by their arrogant and thoughtless actions

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caused a semi-paralysis in the entire administration for well over 24 days.

It is also evident that the Union Government missed many opportunities of restoring normalcy. After the token strike the leaders of the employees carefully refrained from adopting the type of attitude that the success of the token strike might have led them to. They appealed to the Government to stop victimisation and help restore normal working in the various departments affected. Home Minister Chavan was inclined to do so, but after assuring the employees' leaders of speedy action he developed cold feet and allowed the Cabinet to postpone a decision in order to enable Sri Morarji Desai to return and participate in discussions on the subject. This only helped to prove that Sri Chavan was in no position to stand by his assurance. After Sri Desai's arrival, too, the position did not improve; presumably he also did not want to take the blame if anything went wrong. Finally, four leaders had to go on an indefinite fast and the Prime Minister had to return from her three-week tour of Latin America before things could get moving. The massive rallies held at the Central Vista and the demonstration in front of Smt Gandhi's house gave the lie to the propaganda that the employees were not enthusiastic about the demands or the agitation.

Thus the Government's delayed decision to take back all the temporary employees would have been graceful if it had come very much earlier. Many of these so-called temporary employees have put in long years of service. In private establishments such a situation would not have been tolerated by the organised unions. It is strange that so many lakhs of

people should be considered "temporary" after so many years in service. However, this is not the only problem that remains to be tackled. The Government has not given up action against a large number of strike leaders. A "gesture" meant to restore cordial relations between the Government and its employees should certainly have covered them also. Any agitation involves certain "offences" of a minor nature, and to insist on "punishment" in such cases amounts to placing the false prestige of the Government above the need to create a new and healthy atmosphere. The employees' leaders have been wise and courageous enough not to take advantage of the solidarity and proven strength of the employees to bamboozle the Government.

What has to be realised now is that the questions which led to the protest action on September 19 last remain as they were before the token strike. So long as these questions remain unresolved, all thought of normalcy will be futile. The Government's assertion that it has no desire to be vindictive will be judged by its capacity to forget the token strike and its aftermath and resume negotiations with the employees' organisations on the issues of need-based wage, DA merger and full neutralisation. As a first step, the rulers should establish their bona fides by restoring recognition to the Unions and Federations from which such recognition was withdrawn in what can only be described as peevish haste.

If steps on these lines are not taken immediately, the Government will only prove that it is awaiting another, and bigger, confrontation with its employees. And that will not be in the interest of either the administration or the people.

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KASHMIR: SHEIKH AT CROSS-ROADS

THE idea of evolving a consensus between conflicting viewpoints on the solution of Kashmir issue was originally put forward by Maulana Mohammed Sayeed Masoodi, the moderate colleague of Sheikh Abdullah. On the eve of Sheikh's release from detention, Maulana in an exclusive interview said that he would favour a process of consultations between the State's leaders, representing all shades of opinion including the Congress, the National Conference and those from Jammu—a sort of round table conference of leaders to find an acceptable solution of the Kashmir tangle.

Sheikh, whom Maulana wanted to take the initiative for holding such a conference, however, after his release did not show much enthusiasm for the suggestion made by his moderate colleague, even though he did not completely brush aside the idea as a possible course of action for him. What prevented his pursuing the suggestion to its logical end was perhaps the advice from the Plebiscite Front leader Mirza Afzal Beg who suspected foul play in the idea, since it emanated from Maulana his bitter adversary in Sheikh's camp.

The Plebiscite Front chief, according to sources close to him, was not prepared to back Maulana's proposal since he was unsure that Pakistan would favour such a course. The round table conference of leaders, according to these sources, would lend an indirect support to anti-Ayub elements in the Pak occupied Kashmir who were searching

for a third course besides that of accession to Pakistan.

That Pakistani rulers have finally been persuaded to accept the idea of a convention where besides their proteges, Indian viewpoint will have full say is stated to be indicative of a change in Pakistani tactics on Kashmir.

According to official sources Pakistan had wanted the convention to coincide with their move to raise the Kashmir issue in UN, so as to get propaganda advantage from it. These sources also said that Pakistan Government had plans for engineering widespread sabotage activities in Kashmir during November, but had to give up these designs for lack of adequate preparations. This project has now been postponed till spring next, according to these sources, and since Sheikh has agreed to hold another convention either in November or in spring next, official sources claim, Sheikh's new plans may fit in with Pakistani time-table.

It was this assessment of Pakistani designs behind the holding of the convention, that might have had led the hard-liners in New Delhi to try to persuade Kashmir Government to impose a ban on the convention. However Sri Sadiq held his ground and let the Convention take place.

On the eve of the Convention, behind the scene developments in the secessionist camp tended to strengthen the misgivings that the Convention might be nothing more than another forum for airing secessionist views.

The extremists within Sheikh's camp, led by Mirza Afzal Beg

through a series of manoeuvres captured the steering body of this Convention, ousting the moderate from the vantage positions and filling important posts with their own nominees. In the process, Sri Premnath Bazaz was replaced by Sheikh Abdullah as Chairman of the Convention, but along with this he also ordered the steering body to appoint extremist nominees, as Secretary and Joint Secretary respectively of the Convention. The entire Secretariat of the convention was handled practically by the extremists.

Another pre-convention move by extremists was the threat by Awami Action Committee chief, Mirwaiz Farooq to boycott the convention, if his demand for representation in the convention on the basis of party strength were not conceded. Farooq's move came after prolonged parleys between him and Mirza Afzal Beg. Sheikh however declined to yield and reiterated that the steering body would consist of all the elements—representing all the viewpoints, but not on the basis of their strength in the people. It was this assertion by Sheikh that ensured the majority representation to the anti-extremist viewpoint in the steering body.

THE extremists did not confine the pressure tactics to getting their men to hold vantage positions in the steering committee; they made Sheikh rescind from his earlier stand that Convention would devote itself to finding solution to determine the "future disposition" of the State. Sheikh

who had sent a letter to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to permit the entry of those invited from Pakistan occupied Kashmir was persuaded to "equalise" his effort by writing to President Ayub Khan as well. The letter to Ayub Khan, however made a significant departure from the agreed agenda of the convention, in that it endorsed the extremist view that any solution evolved by the convention "would be subject to ratification of people", a variant of the plebiscite in Kashmir.

Coinciding with Sheikh's commitment to Ayub Khan, the Plebiscite Front leadership decided to give its members "freedom" to propose any solution they thought fit while participating in the Convention. Reporting this, the weekly organ of the Jamat-i-Islami—whose leaders have lately wormed their way into the confidence of Mirza Afzal Beg—said that it had been decided that those participating in the Convention on behalf of the Plebiscite Front would raise their voice in favour of State's accession to Pakistan.

While these moves by extremists were going apace, a statement from Pak-occupied Kashmir added a new dimension to the Convention. Hamid Khan, the President of Azad Kashmir addressing a public meeting in Mirpur town of occupied Kashmir said that those attending the Convention should voice their demand that India should honour its commitments to Kashmir. Pakistan Radio in its broadcasts gave more than usual prominence to the speech made by Hamid Khan.

As the Convention met, it became clear that the main tussle would be between the extremists in the Plebiscite Front who gave the right of self-determination a secessionist pro-Pakistani slant, and the pro-autonomy within India represented by a broad spectrum of opinion from pro-West Autonomy Forum to Communists, aided by such men as Sri Premnath Bazaz and Sri Shamim Ahmed Shamim,

both leaning on the Autonomy Forum.

The pro-Pakistani viewpoint represented by Mirwaiz Farooq, and the pro-merger viewpoint of the Congress and the Jan Sangh, which was absent, did not much dominate the convention. However, Sri Sadiq, before the convention had set out his viewpoint in reply to the invitation letter from Sheikh Abdullah in which he described the Convention an exercise in futility and invited the Sheikh once again to lead the old battle for justice and social advance. A significant point made by Sri Sadiq which found reiteration in a paper read by CPI spokesman Sri M. L. Misri related to the decisions of the Constituent Assembly which did away with hereditary rule and endorsed the decisions for land to the tiller without compensation. Sri Sadiq said in his letter to the Sheikh how could the decisions of this Assembly on the issue of accession to India be declared invalid when he had accepted its decisions on the land reforms and the hereditary rule of the Maharaja. Sri Misri in his paper said that the attitude towards the decisions of the Constituent Assembly both on accession and other vital reforms formed the test for every democrat.

National Conference representative Bakhshi Gulam Mohammad who practically boycotted the Convention from the third day on the plea that he was not being allowed to read his paper, seemed however, to utilise the occasion to re-establish his bonafides with New Delhi by declaring at a press conference that he stood by accession to India which was a closed chapter. Bakhshi however favoured retention of Article 370, thus demarcating his party from the pro-merger viewpoint. Bakhshi later at a press conference which was addressed by Sri Prem Bhasin and Sri Kamath declared that his party would work in collaboration with PSP. His paper was later read at the convention by Sri Piaray Lal Handoo, a former Communist sympathiser, who shifted his allegiance to Bakhshi with the merger of Democratic National

Conference into the National Conference.

While the Convention as a whole was divided broadly between the secessionist extremists and the pro-autonomy within Indian framework, there were other trends that slanted either towards the former or the latter. These middle groups can broadly fall under three categories:

First, the autonomy-for-Jammu group, which successfully pressed for the protection of interests of Jammu in an overall solution within Indian framework. Prominent amongst this group were Sri Balraj Puri, Sri Ved Bhasin and Sri Bachan Singh Pan-chhi,—all three known for their rather pro-West leanings.

Second, Sri Premnath Bazaz and Sri Shamim Ahmed Shamim, both from Kashmir Valley, whose pro-American attitude in politics is well known. Incidentally, two of Shamim's uncles are leaders of the autonomy movement in Pak-occupied Kashmir.

Third, the Communists and the National Conference representatives, whose activity in the Convention was not so conspicuous as that of the Jammu Autonomy Forum or the Bazaz and Shamim group who received more than adequate coverage in the press.

All the above three groups stand for Kashmir's Autonomy within the Indian Union.

In the middle were also ex-officials, numbering about 14, who were divided in their approach to the problem. Justice Shahmiri who has influential connections in Pakistan and was constitutional adviser during the Sheikh's regime—but is also friendly to the present Government—proposed a commonwealth of India and Pakistan, reversion to pre-1953 position, participation in elections for fight within Kashmir as against the two other ex-officials like Sri Jaya Lal Kaul, former principal of a local college, who favoured autonomy within India and another anti-Sheikh ex-official, Sri Gulam Hassan Khan who propounded the theory of "one land mass" from Iran to Kashmir—a pan-Islamic concept in which Kashmir according to him would have a natural place.

Sri Khan bitterly attacked Sheikh Abdullah, holding him responsible for Kashmiri's accession to India and the consequent ills of the Kashmiri people.

The second group in the middle category was the one owing allegiance to Maulana Sayeed and Mohiuddin Kara, whose nominee Shyam Lal Yachu merely reiterated the demand for the right of self-determination. Significantly, Yachu who represented the Political Conference viewpoint, did not raise the demand of plebiscite. Those owing allegiance to Maulana Sayeed formed mainly by the expelled group of dissidents from the Plebiscite Front pleaded for participation in elections as the constitutional path of struggle for the achievement of the right of self-determination. Prominent amongst this group were Sri Ali Mohammed Butt, Khwaja Mubarak Shah and Sri Gulam Qadir from Ganderbal. They asserted—barring Sri Gulam Qadir—that the path traversed by the Plebiscite Front for the last decade was a futile search which had led to a blind alley. Like Justice Shahmiri, they said that entry into the legislature was the only way which would end in the realisation of the right of self-determination.

The pro-Pakistanis formed part of the extremists of the Plebiscite Front led by Mirza Afzal Beg. Together with the militant student group, they described affiliation with India as colonial domination and generally favoured militant path of struggle—for withdrawal of Indian forces from Kashmir by stages, five years of neutralisation with guarantees from United Nations, and independence.

Apart from them, the other pro-Pakistani group led by Awami Action Committee chief Mirwaiz Farooq described the accession of 1947 as "temporary arrangement"—this was echoed by Mirza Afzal Beg also—and said that Kashmir had natural geographical affinity with Pakistan which was "a more important party" in the dispute. In defence of his claim that Kashmir was geographically almost a part of Pakistan, Mirwaiz referred to the length of the border joining the

State with Pakistan. By this standard of argument Ladakh should go to China, parts of Jammu and Kashmir Valley to Pakistan, and East Bengal merge either with Assam or West Bengal.

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Sheikh Abdullah himself did not make any new proposal, while Mirza Afzal Beg repeated the old arguments including that it was for India to spell out the solution if they thought plebiscite was not practicable. Their major concentration was on reminding India to fulfil the commitments made to the people of Kashmir by Nehru and Gandhi.

The Sheikh confined himself to proposals made in the article contributed by him to *American Foreign Affairs* in 1965, but in his opening address he referred to flaws in the Dixon Plan, which suffers from "the obvious defect that it denies to the areas other than the Valley what it concedes in the case of the Valley and its adjoining areas. This was in accord with his reported suggestion for elections in three zones,—Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir Valley together into Pak-occupied Kashmir—which will have their own Constituent Assemblies—to decide regionwise on three choices, accession to Pakistan or to India or to remain independent.

The Convention was astir when much to the disappointment of the the extremists Sri Jaya Parkash Narain, in a well argued case for decision within the framework of the Indian union, asked the Sheikh and his colleagues to make up their mind now and not to escape the responsibility of finding the solution of complicated issues. J P also ruled out independence and asserted that as he understood the limitations imposed by the present circumstances "did not permit the Government of India to go beyond considering a solution which took Kashmir outside India." He said that Pakistan after 1965 had lost the *locus standi* in the dispute.

At the public meeting the Sheikh rejected JP's plea and declared that freedom would not come for the asking. It has to

be wrested through strength. The Sheikh's militant rejoinder which almost committed the convention to a rigid and bellicose posture appeared at one time to reduce the whole process of consensus and JP's inauguration of the convention, to a farce. But the moderates hoping that the Sheikh's posture was meant to placate the extremists in his camp did not force the issue. This was almost corroborated by J P himself at the press conference later on when he said that he did not think that the Sheikh had closed the door for meaningful dialogue with New Delhi.

The Sheikh himself later told reporters that while he rejected that autonomy within India could offer the basis for dialogue with India, he was of the view that even the pro-merger viewpoint has to be accommodated. His criteria of a feasible solution was that it should ensure peace to the people of the State. He would judge every solution offered on this basis, he added.

While the Sheikh-JP dialogue was on, the extremists in the Plebiscite Front were busy building up pressure on the Sheikh to keep up his militant stance against India. This came in the form of a leaflet circulated by the youth wing of the Plebiscite Front which dubbed JP as the political broker of India and announced that the youth of Kashmir was prepared for a battle on the Algerian or Vietnamese model. Lest the extremist posture on JP's stand went unnoticed the Plebiscite Front General Secretary in an unscheduled paper later described it as "another betrayal" and a "trap" by India.

The Convention as a consequence of these threatening postures, almost reached a stalemate. But finally it wisely decided to skip over the discussion stage and postpone the search for solution till the next convention. The proposal was accepted and it was left to the 12-member steering body to draft the resolution laying the principles which should guide the search of a solution. This was a

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September 19 Strike

SATISH LOOMBA

THIS note is confined to discussing only one aspect of the Central Government employees strike—was the strike on September 19 a success?

Sri Madhu Limaye has posed this question in his article in *Mainstream* (October 5, 1968) and though he has not directly stated this, he has by implication argued that the strike was not a success. He has laid down two criteria for judging the success of a strike: "the results it achieves in terms of the charter of demands" and "whether the strike call is obeyed by the workers and whether the strike is complete or not."

In the case of the Central Government employees no one thought that the charter of demands which had need-based minimum wage and revision of DA as its main demands could be achieved through a one-day token strike. Indeed the avowed purpose of the strike was limited to a protest against the Government's refusal to even refer the demands to arbitration. No one had any illusion either that all the workers would obey the strike call, specially when the INTUC has unions in Railways and Defence, the two services which cover the overwhelming majority of the Central Government employees.

All experienced trade unionists know however, that there are other valid criteria besides the two laid down by Sri Limaye. A strike may not succeed in winning the demands, may not even be complete. It could still be called successful if it enhances the militancy of the workers, strengthens their unity and organisation, exposes the disruptors and poses the issues sharply. Indeed the acid test of the success of a

strike is not the winning of demands, for we know from experience that many unions ceased to exist as unions even after the most brilliant success in these terms. The crux lies elsewhere.

In my estimate the September 19 strike was a success. That it could have been a bigger success had the workers been more organised, is no argument for denying the measure of success achieved.

The success of this one-day token strike lies in the fact that despite the Ordinances, despite the firings, lathi-charges and brutal police attacks, despite the INTUC disruption, despite the betrayal by Maniben Kara & Co, and despite the shortcomings and weaknesses of most of the organisations leading the strike, a far larger number of employees did go on strike than in 1960. It lies in the fact that despite the termination notices served on over 50,000 temporary workers, despite the arrest, suspension and break in service of thousands and thousands of others, the employees continued their heroic resistance in multifarious forms against this all-out offensive. In fact the unity, consciousness and militancy of the employees has been greater after the strike than before it.

In other words, the strike and its aftermath succeeded in enhancing the consciousness of the employees. Unlike the aftermath of 1960, the unity of the JCA—the common united platform of Central Government employees—has emerged stronger after the strike than before it. And above all, the success lies in two other factors of national importance.

The Fifteenth Indian Labour Conference for the first time laid down in real terms the norms which should go to determine a

need-based minimum wage. Since then Wage Board after Wage Board, and the Second Pay Commission itself covering Central Government employees has refused to implement this tripartite agreement. Despite the fact that the need-based minimum has been won by some small sections of workers, notably in the pharmaceutical and aluminium industries, the overwhelming majority of the workers in public or private sectors as in the Government sectors have been denied this minimum. This strike has focussed the demand for a need-based minimum for the first time as a *national* demand which can unite all sections of the industrial and white-collar workers in all sectors of employment. It has put this demand as a demand for action and not as a mere distant propaganda slogan. This is a big achievement, which despite all shortcomings and failures, makes the September 19 strike a big success.

The demand for a need-based national minimum wage is the counter-slogan of the working class to the slogan of the employers to freeze the wages.

The second factor is the unity of all central trade union organisations (barring of course the INTUC) which has emerged, in however limited a form, round the heroic struggle of the Central Government employees. The AITUC, HMS, UTUC and HMP have come together and worked for a common programme of action in support of the Central Government employees. The AITUC, HMS and UTUC which (apart from the INTUC) are the recognised national trade union organisations have demanded that

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Hindi and the "Coming Confrontation"

C. N. CHITTA RANJAN

THE extent of harm done to the cause of national unity and integration by the divisive forces in both North and South is brought out vividly by the campaign recently launched in Tamilnad against the Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha's move for a number of single-teacher schools to teach Hindi.

The idea behind the scheme was quite simple: the elimination of Hindi from school education in that State had rendered a large number of trained Hindi teachers unemployed, and the Sabha thought that those who desired to learn Hindi and voluntarily came forward for the purpose could be provided for by the scheme. Normally, a plan of this kind involving no compulsion whatever should have evoked no objection from any quarter; but the vicious atmosphere created by the utterances and activities of the Hindi fanatics in the North and by those who for political reasons fanned anti-Hindi hysteria in the South, has been such that even a harmless and unexceptionable idea like arrangements for voluntary learning of a language cannot be put through because of organised obstruction. It brings out the depth of suspicion and distrust among at least a section of the non-Hindi people.

Gandhiji and the Congress once thought of Hindi as the future national language of free India that would act as a cementing force among the different linguistic groups; Hindi found its place in the Constitution precisely for this reason.

But in reality Hindi has come to be a symbol of division rather than of unity; the reason is that those who thought that an early switch-over to Hindi as the sole link language would give them a big advantage in controlling

national affairs, tried their best to force the pace from the start. They did not hesitate to discard Gandhiji's concept of Hindi or Hindustani as a rich combination of Hindi and Urdu further enriched by words from the nation's other languages, many of which have certainly developed to a much greater extent than Hindi and have ancient traditions. Even in the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly it was clear that an attempt had begun to impose Sanskritized Hindi on the whole country.

It was inevitable that politicians in the non-Hindi areas should have begun to be apprehensive that once Hindi occupied the centre of the stage and English was totally eliminated, they would cease to play an effective part as hitherto in shaping the destiny of the nation.

In such a situation it was natural that unscrupulous elements on both sides should have adopted methods of propaganda and agitation calculated to exacerbate feelings; it has been largely a political game aimed at achieving popularity without hard work among the people; tub-thumping oratory to whip up chauvinistic emotions was to them a substitute for campaigns and agitations aimed at bringing about radical changes in the socio-economic structure of the country. Votes and power rather than the interests of the common people were the guiding factors. This is as much true of the anti-Hindi hysteria whipped up first by the Dravida Kazhagam and then by the DMK in the South as of the *Angrezi Hatao* campaign of the SSP and the Jana Sangh in the North.

Few have so far disputed the need for a common language for the country; the difference really is on what language it should be

and how it should be brought into being. Gandhiji was the first to realise that no language could be forced on any section of the population; he wanted all the languages of India to flower and come into their own and also become the instruments of administration in the respective regions so that effective popular participation in government could be ensured. So far as the national language was concerned, the very first thing he did after coming to the conclusion that Hindustani was best suited for the purpose, was to organise Hindustani *prachar* in the non-Hindi areas. The aim was that the common language should be based entirely on persuasion and acceptance. He was aware of the largely unexpressed misgivings in the non-Hindi areas, and was particular that voluntary acceptance should be ensured over a long period so that there would be no room for such misgivings and suspicions. On one occasion he even referred to the rumblings in Madras and made his position clear.

But the Gandhian approach, which was later accepted by Jawaharlal Nehru as the best for the country, was not good enough for the Hindi fanatics who saw in the acceptance of Hindi by the Congress a guarantee that they would become virtual rulers of India. Apart from rejecting the Hindustani advocated by the Mahatma, and getting Hindi with Devnagari script into the Constitution by a single vote, they began to apply pressure in various ways to get English eliminated here and now, so as to establish the supremacy of Hindi—and of themselves in the political context—without further loss of time. The sharp reaction in the non-Hindi areas was a natural consequence to these developments. The attempts to

organise a switch-over by the backdoor within the administration by issue of circulars etc was bound to backfire; they did.

When Jawaharlal Nehru found that Hindi was being converted into a Frankenstein monster threatening the whole basis of national unity, he came out with his famous assurance that Hindi would not be imposed from above, that it would take its place only when all sections of Indian public opinion accepted it of their own accord.

When Lal Bahadur Shastri virtually went back on this assurance within months of Nehru's death, the massive student agitation in Madras State resulted. This was answered with a patently artificial anti-English agitation in some Hindi areas. Then came the Madras objection to the use of Hindi terms by the NCC. And now the agitation against single-teacher schools.

It is true that there is an "economic" aspect to the controversy on Hindi: Ram Manohar Lohia's chief grievance was that the people of the Hindi areas had not advanced sufficiently compared to those of the non-Hindi areas, for this meant that employment opportunities were not available on an even basis. On the other hand, the chief reason why the anti-Hindi agitation swayed the student community in the non-Hindi areas was the fear that the job opportunities open to them so far would be blocked once Hindi became the sole link language. The fears had a big emotional impact despite the fact that the number of jobs provided by the Central Government bears no relation whatever to the number of graduates and others turned out by the various universities year after year.

However, these fears do not seem entirely justified considering the fact that even with the continuance of English young men and women from Madras are faring less and less well in the competitive examinations—a fact which is reported to have caused considerable concern to the university authorities in that State.

It is also a fact that even with

the DMK in office for over 18 months, there is yet no sign of Tamil coming into its own in its home State. It is necessary to point this out because one of the chief arguments put forward against Hindi is that it would prevent the growth of the regional languages and their becoming the vehicles of communication and administration in the respective regions. Whatever the position of Hindi in the national context, there has been nothing to prevent the State Governments from switching over totally to the regional languages for their own purposes; this they have not done.

Some of these aspects of the language question are overlooked by Mohan Ram (*Hindi Against India: the Meaning of DMK*—Rachna Prakashan: pp 137; 1968; Rs 15). It is no doubt true, as he points out, that Hindu communalism has found a handy weapon in Hindi fanaticism; to the communalist Hindi is a weapon of attack against Urdu, supposedly the language of the Muslims. He is also right in saying that in trying to force the pace on the language question the Hindi politician's aim is to establish the hegemony of the Hindi areas over the whole country. But Mohan Ram's answer to fanaticism is a kind of hysteria, for how else can one view the bland assertion that the "coastlanders" are better endowed in every way than the "midlanders"?

It is true that the Hindi fanatics imagine that they somehow are superior beings as their language has been given an honoured place in the Constitution; but the effective reply to this ridiculous assumption does not lie in the equally absurd counter-proposition that the Hindi-speaking people are almost tribal while the non-Hindi people of the coastal belt are highly civilised persons. Mohan Ram says with obvious relish that while the Hindi midlanders agitate on such obscurantist issues like cow slaughter the non-Hindi coastlanders agitate for a steel plant or a shipyard. According to Mohan Ram, "the DMK, a separatist movement, though it has ceased to be secessionist,

represents an alternative focus to the politics of the midland." Till the DMK was swept into power the speeches of its leaders gave no indication whatever of any kind of programme for social and economic change. Glorification of Tamil and raising of the bogey of Northern domination formed the keynotes. Steel plants and shipyards might have figured as applause-winning gimmicks, but the DMK did not grow to its present size and strength on the basis of any modern political and economic ideas. It is only now, in power, that the DMK faces the realities of political and economic problems. Mohan Ram himself admits at one place that the DMK "is stuck at the dead-centre and has been implementing the Congress policies in its own way." Is this indeed the "alternative focus" he is talking about?

It is difficult to disagree with Mohan Ram when he says that Hindi is not a language issue but a political one; but it is not so for the reasons he has given. In a country with several languages, many of them well developed, and used to administrative affairs being conducted by the English-knowing elite, any attempt to change the language equations is bound to become a political question. National and State administration, and the links between the Centre and the States, cannot be divorced from politics; nor can the language question be divorced from these factors and viewed in isolation. Other factors like religious obscurantism and regional chauvinism are also bound to impinge on all these. It may be that the Hindi midland is less advanced in several ways than the non-Hindi coastland; but this should be seen as legitimate reason for economic factors like regional imbalances also having an effect on the language question. Language in the Indian context cannot for a long time to come be separated from politics, and there does not seem to be much point in waxing eloquent over this.

It cannot also be denied that while the anti-Hindi movement

of the South had its origins in anti-Brahminism, it has grown into one embracing all sections including the Brahmins of Tamilnad. The old agitation against the Brahmins of the South was the result of resentment among the advanced section of non-Brahmins at the former occupying key positions in the administration and later on even in the national movement. The Justice Party, which represented the non-Brahmin demand for cutting the Brahmin to size, was unfortunately made of sycophants of the British rulers, so much so that even Ramaswami Naicker gave up hope of being able to use it as an instrument for the furtherance of his own ideas and had to found the Dravida Kazhagam. The anti-Brahmin slogan was extended to cover the North, on the ground that the Brahmin of the South was acting as a stooge of the Northern leaders who were out to establish their hold on the whole country. EVR's anti-Hindi agitation during the first Congress Ministry headed by Sri Rajagopalachari was thus aimed at the Brahmins and their bosses in the North; EVR did not leave anyone in doubt about this.

The difference between then and now is that Sri Rajagopalachari, who in 1937 introduced Hindi in the face of EVR's staunch opposition, is now spearheading the anti-Hindi movement—in favour of English, not of Tamil which the ruling DMK is pledged to enthrone. The point is that popular emotions in the South have been gradually roused over a long period for various reasons, and it will be an over-simplification to say that it is merely a reaction to the stances of the Hindi fanatics in the Congress and outside it in the post-independence period, although there is no doubt that the latter's utterances and activities have helped aggravate ill-feeling.

While no one can quarrel with Mohan Ram's proposition that by their haste to establish Hindi as the sole link language the Hindi fanatics have helped to make the maintenance of national unity exceedingly difficult, one does not know whether to take

his remark that "Indian unity is a myth" seriously or not; his theory is that there is a clear line of demarcation in Indian culture between north and south. It is not easy to accept this theory in view of the many common features that obtain in the two parts of the country. Many differences are inevitable among people speaking different languages; the question is whether the differences are decisive or the similarities and the factors capable of forging unity. Emphasis on the dividing line is Mohan Ram's choice.

Mohan Ram's effort appears to be to make out that what is ahead is a people-versus-people confrontation between North and South (or Midland and Coastland, to use his terminology), and that in such a confrontation the Coastlanders will demand only equality while the Midlanders will insist on domination. It may be satisfactory to draw a clear line and imagine that we have found the answer.

The truth however is infinitely more complicated. It is that the common people of both the Midland and the Coastland are not very much in the picture; their lives are dominated by a handful of vested interests whose common aims cut across linguistic barriers. Such interests in one area may finance a particular divisive group, but they also finance other groups so as to have a measure of security whoever wins ultimately. Vested interests will fight whatever hurts them and support whatever is useful to them. It is no accident that vested interests in Kerala and elsewhere are ranged against the UF Government in that State, but no such organised denigration of the DMK Government in Madras is taking place. Mohan Ram's analysis of the political and economic character of the DMK shows why, though he does not say so. It is a party which as yet has no economic aims which can upset the digestion of the capitalist and the rich peasant. Mohan Ram thinks that a split might take place and the Leftists emerge on top; but that is in the lap of the future.

The coming confrontation, if

at all, can only be between the affluent few and the unprivileged many. It is a confrontation that will cut across language and regional barriers. Vested interests are certainly interested in the retention of the barriers, for vertical division of the people and keeping different groups at loggerheads with one another is conducive to the furtherance of their aims. What has to be fought is the dominance of a minority, whether it is the English-knowing one or the Hindi-knowing one or the monied one; in the final analysis it is the last mentioned class that makes use of the other minority groups for its own ends.

A study of the conflicts thrown up by the language question should have led to the conclusion that greater autonomy for the States and guarantee of equal influence for all the States at the Centre will alone ensure national unity and integration on a lasting basis. Instead, Mohan Ram prefers to believe that disintegration is natural and inevitable and it is only "Hindu communalism and the all-India bourgeoisie" which are preventing the process.

The divisive forces are invariably fascist in nature, but Mohan Ram thinks that "if fascism overtakes the divisive forces in good time, India's unity is assured, as long as the new equilibrium could be made to last." He appears to make the mistake of thinking the DMK is the only divisive force and is a healthy one; the fact is that Hindi fanaticism, Hindu communalism and regional chauvinism represented by groups like the Shiv Sena, are all divisive forces and are invariably fascist in nature and outlook. The DMK at one stage was very much a potential fascist organisation, too. It is these that deliberately keep the country divided.

The answer is to organise the people to fight them back, and not to throw up one's hands in despair and await the arrival of a new fascism. And the answer can be provided only by bringing economic issues touching the common people to the fore through a mass movement on a national basis. And the answer cannot be provided by the Cassandras so familiar to us.

BOOK REVIEW

This week six years ago, the Chinese military attack across the Indian frontier brought about a major crisis in Indian politics. Major General Habibullah reviewing D. R. Mankekar's book, The Guilty Men of 1962 (Publishers: The Tulsi Shah Enterprises, Bombay, 1968; Price Rs 17.50) makes some significant observations about the factors leading to India's defence reverses.

1962: Where That Guilt Lies

E. HABIBULLAH

BRICADIER Mankekar's Book *The Guilty Men of 1962* makes interesting reading in its wide revelation of facts. But some of his conclusions and particularly his recommendations show great amateurism and immature digestion.

In fact, his epilogue entitled "ambivalence" could be a fair title to his book itself. For, at times one feels that having done justice to Nehru and Menon according to his own lights, he then almost leans over backwards to justify the Chinese action by incriminating them vis-a-vis the Chinese. He quotes Menon as saying that "The India-China dispute was not of such a magnitude as could precipitate a war". This was said at "Tezpur on January 10, 1962." But in "December 1961 Nehru assured Parliament that during the previous two years the situation had 'broadly changed' in our favour, not so much as we want it. . . . The situation has been changing from the military point of view The allusion here is to multiplication of check posts". These check-posts were in pursuit of the forward policy.

In fact, Brigadier Mankekar has really failed to analyse in depth the causes and effects of the Chinese and Indian policies in relation to an indeterminate frontier. While he has indicted

some of the Opposition also, he has indicted them on the wrong counts. Acharya Kripalani whom he has indicted for being too Gandhian was not wrong in taking a Gandhian stand; but he together with some Socialist and rightist elements completely clouded the real issue and forced the Prime Minister into action which the Prime Minister would never otherwise have taken had it not been for the fact of this totally non-Gandhian gang-up.

In tracing events leading up to 1962, the author omits to stress two important points: firstly that it had been arranged to sign an agreement in Peking during Nehru's first visit, as a climax to his tour, but owing to Kidwai's death the visit was cut short and the boundary treaty remained unsigned. Secondly, that India was directly involved in assisting in the escape of and giving asylum to the god-king of Tibet who by treaty owed allegiance to Peking.

Nor, has Mankekar gone far enough back to show that Chiang-kai-shek had laid claim to much of the land the Chinese now claim during the tenure of the British. In this the USA had solidly backed China. In fact, the maps Mankekar refers to as shown by the Communists were printed in Chicago.

As the first Indian Comman-

der in Assam, the reviewer had with Sir Akbar Hydari planned a number of interior posts and the building of limited roads even before the Communists took China or Lhasa; but as the tribes would have shown resentment to our intrusion we were very careful to get a feel before we did so. This shows that though the area was ours we were not in any definite "control" of the area; for the British had deliberately reserved it as a savage backward buffer. Even the Tibetan Tax collectors came in force and took tribute from chieftains only when chieftains were not strong enough to repulse them! It was never the original plan to use our army for this job.

As regards our North West, around the Aksai Chin, this had been Kashmir state territory and no one, for certain, knows what extent of control the Maharajah exercised and how the British Resident looked upon him vis-a-vis Tibet. Who in any case was Lama Guru Saheb Singh?

What Mankekar has not brought out at all is that the whole frontier question was ripe for decision and would have been negotiated had something not happened after Nehru's return from China. Anyone who had served on the N. W. Frontier of India can see the style of the

Indian Political Service gradually asserting itself. The position was aggravated by the so-called Socialists and the right wing. At last, Nehru faltered and confessed that the Chinese had been building a road and we knew they had. This was a signal for a general onslaught, right or wrong, with the main object of softening up Nehru and making him take sides in the cold war when he was still getting over Beru Bari. The USSR deftly kept out, otherwise it was intended to force us against them too.

Next came the 1958 incident of the killing or capture of one of our patrols. Relations became further frozen. It may be noted in passing when many of our officers and men were killed by Israel in the Gaza strip no similar protest was raised by the so-called Socialists and super-nationalists. A series of questions was raised to bring about the discomfiture of the Prime Minister more than to understand or solve the problem.

The author, however, has hardly heeded this but raised a long series of questions in and out of context to make out, perforce a case against Nehru and Menon. In his own manner, he has also gone all out to play upon their *laissez faire* Gandhian stance and their abhorrence of war. A really good example given by him of the sort of questions asked is an amazing one by Sri N. G. Goray. "Does it mean that in parts of our country which are inaccessible, any nation can come and build roads and camps?" Nehru gave a most long, involved and guarded reply because he could not obviously make a statement to the advantage of China and yet he had to say something to satisfy the leading question. It was such questions which finally bound him down.

In 1960 before the Chinese came to the conference table it was already a foregone conclusion that nothing was negotiable. The conference only angered Chou-en-lai further. At this stage Mankekar thinks we should have made an all-out effort to prepare for war. Why, no one knows, but he thinks that the

Chinese collected a lot of information at the conference which they used later. However, with the forward policy inaugurated in 1959 by both sides, the irresistible force had one day to come up with the immovable object. It was, therefore, essential to bring this policy to a halt at some early stage. Surely the author should have made this a strong point.

Though Mankekar damns Nehru ("with international peace and friendship for-all as the sheet anchor of our foreign policy") he forgets the fact that money was then being well spent in the late fifties and early sixties in giving life to India, through the foundation of basic and heavy industries. Was Nehru thus not right to have convinced himself and his country that wars had been banished.....and therefore armies were outmoded status symbols"; particularly the cost of armies that they maintain in the so-called powerful countries? One cannot agree with the author that that was the "era of the great illusion". Rather, one would assert that today is the era of Dutch courage. Purely strategically, India's real frontier still lies in Baluchistan, and Waziristan, but why do we not go mad about them? If the British were "wise" about that then, why are we not wise?" "The British had a clear-headed integrated policy". Ours was to give our people prosperity as soon as possible.

Mankekar nearly reaches the truth, however, in the chapter "A Can't-Do-It Army" when he states "If democracy is government by discussion, we had too much of it at Defence and External Affairs Ministries." In fact it should have been pointed out that almost every major wrong decision was made by meetings of representatives of the Ministries of External Affairs, Defence and Home. The Union Cabinet Secretary often presiding. The major blunder was when "The Defence Ministry was called upon to take over the manning of those (seven) posts" which were affirmed as "disputed points". This was in 1954; no army should ever man such frontier posts. Therefore, Mankekar is not a bit

right in calling us a cant-do-it army. What he should have said was that such jobs were not military jobs at all, but should have been entrusted to locally raised militia watching posts. Can he quote us what country in the world spreads its army like a thin slice of butter along its frontiers? Even France with Spain, Italy and Germany along its pre-war frontiers never did so. The whole concept is amateurish and it still persists. This is as I said earlier therefore ambivalence due to incomplete digestion of the subject. However he very rightly praises General Thorat's concept of the defence of NEFA. Of course, Thorat's concept was a most correct one.

However, in spite of Professor Galbraith's clear statement that America was not interested in China and India if they fought, Mankekar thinks a solidly supported pro-American policy would have ensured the safety of India. Would it not have made the USSR hard? Would Khrushchev have therefore exhorted "co-existence" in support of India? These are world questions which the author should have examined before rushing into suggestions. Anyhow, how well are the Americans supporting Ky? Would India look prettier in that role? He has started out (as in one place he accuses others of doing) with a predetermined solution, which he has used the previous chapters to justify. This is a pity as the whole book, in so far as it refers to Nehru and Menon, becomes hackneyed and off truth, severely confusing the issues.

The author's reasons for China's withdrawal are also misleading. When in Chapter I he states the relative strength of our forces, why should China have wanted not to risk facing ours? He states 'Mao's dictum (on page 73)' "Attack when sure of victory, then establish truce" but does not support it in his reasons. It had given India shock enough, but to have moved further would have made matters not better but worse for China from the political and economic points of view, not from the military situation. Hence, true to his dictum Mao withdrew.

It would take a book to trace and come to the truth and, one had hoped, a writer who is an ex-army officer would have done so. More the pity that though the tactical defeat is well discussed and presented the reasoning for the rest, is erroneous, wrong and positively dangerous. Moreover there is ample evidence in it to show that the author has not written it with impartiality. One day someone must do so.

Briefly the true history is that when the British left they left a buffer state in Tibet, the ownership of which they always recognized as Chinese, but treated under British protection. They kept it backward and feudal and full of wandering tribes. For India to have taken on the imperialist role of Britain would have been the negation of our own professions, beside being a genuine folly. In any case, we would have had to move forces in, and could we have done so? May it not have driven the Tibetans into taking up arms? It was only unquestioned imperial power that enabled Britain to hold on there. After this, the presence of our post office and representative in Lhasa had little meaning, though Mankekar may think it significant.

Next, there is the question of the vital moment when a treaty was to be signed. Why was it not signed? Other people, namely, a certain section of Congressmen backed by so-called Socialists and openly Rightist elements raised such a hue and cry that Nehru had second thoughts. To add to this, a key ministry briefed its Rightist Minister on the hard line. The then Foreign Secretary was a well known die-hard British cadre civil servant. Such solutions, as "Forward policies", military control, and control through chieftains, are all relics of the NWFP. To convert a 2000-mile frontier into an NWFP with a formidable and awake China sitting above one, is, to say the least, sheer folly. To expect the army to "hold it down" was crass stupidity.

Coming to the border campaign—it was scarcely an engagement of such a magnitude—

if we may call it a campaign. This was the rightful culmination of the forward policy. Did we have too few troops to commit? I would say not. Was it logistics that held us up? I would again say not. Let us have a look at 4 Div. and the early operations when the Chinese came down from behind Thag La. Brigadier Delvi was hurriedly called to duty. The Brigade was thrown together and the Chinese were aware of our wanting to "throw them out." We had merely to demonstrate when they attacked in force, what else was to be expected? We then fell back on Se La and Bomdi La. General Niranjan Prasad was relieved by Pathania, Brigadiers Lal and Sayed by Hoshier Singh and Gurbax Singh. The Corps and its commander were all new. The army was spread-eagled all over the place while further attack from the North was imminent. Who does one blame? Nehru, Menon, and the Army? or the faceless men behind the Ministers and over the army? The country will have to judge them. Is this why the Henderson-Brooks report is kept from the inquisitive public? The reason for our being pushed back was neither inadequacy of arms and logistics nor yet a badly organised and trained army. Nehru had made his "throw them out" statement, at whose behest? I submit it was the Defence Minister's, advised by the three "Ministries" and unknown to the forces. It is quite extraordinary, the extent to which such people had intruded into the domain of army affairs. There is even today a Joint Secretary (G) in the Defence Ministry who deals with the training, weapons and the deployment sides.

Indeed the improvement in the situation brought about by Krishna Menon was a God-send after the performance of his predecessors. The real interference in promotion and selection came from as low as Deputy Secretary level. The dispute over Kaul as depicted by Brigadier Mankekar was by no means a new thing or a new cord in string-pulling and favouritism. As early as 1948 General Rudra was to take over as an Army

Commander; but another General, who had been a failure all his life save for passing one important examination at one stage of his career, was promoted while Rudra was enroute to take over. The manner in which Generals Cariappa and Rajendra Sinhji were treated by Defence Ministry officials has yet to be known. These were the mess makers, right from the start.

India started on freedom with a combined tri-service organisation—something other countries could have been envious of. But the three services were then created to "balance each other" in the grand strategy of intrigue. What result; could be expected from this? Probably, Nehru as Prime Minister for so many years will have to bear the blame for all that went wrong in the fifteen years upto the 1962 debacle; but his Civil servants never changed their role one iota. From serving King George VI they became servants of the new Government. Many never felt themselves to be servants of the people. In fact, some felt themselves to be even more directly *the government*. Hence the Forward Policy, manning and holding the frontier and their grand external and internal policies nagging away at secular and non-aligned policies, slowly and surely took the country to the disaster of 1962. If there was not enough money to buy arms, for killing, upto 1962; today there is nor enough money to buy anything else for living. If one observes the market's sudden rises one will find 1960 and 1962 to be important dates. For, when money is fed into the economy by way of arms and large forces, that money is unproductive and represents no real value. It must therefore, lead to inflation. Such inflation if allowed to be linked to world-wide outside recession (it need not be) leads to bankruptcy and even collapse.

Today if there are people that are really satisfied with India's defence progress, it must be the vast section of people who are daily fed with statements that we are ready "to meet all eventualities" and also those Chinese who understand the business of

(Continued on Page 38)

Whither Vidarbha's Agriculture ?

A Case Study of Agrarian Crisis

SUDAM DESHMUKH

WHEN we achieved independence, the accent on agricultural sector was on the question of *Land Reforms*. Everybody swore by the slogan of "*Land to the Tiller*". The land legislations that followed during the first five years of independence, broadly revolved round three basic points:

Firstly, 'abolition' of intermediaries—like Zamindars, Jagirdars, Inamdars etc., secondly, protecting the tenant and eventually conferring on him the 'proprietary' rights of land; and thirdly, imposition of "ceilings" on land-holdings, acquisition of lands above the ceilings and their distribution.

However, the 20 years of Independence has done little to translate the slogan of *Land to the Tiller* into a reality. The Draft of Fourth Five-year Plan, officially admits:

"Administrative arrangements for enforcement and supervision are often inadequate and public opinion has not been sufficiently built up to quicken the pace of reforms."

"The economic condition of tenants, even when they have been conferred permanent rights, still continues to be weak.....Numerous ejectments of tenants have occurred under the guise of 'voluntary surrenders'. This has tended to defeat one of the major aims of the Reform." (*4th Five Year Plan Draft, August 1966*, pp 128-129).

The comments of the Planning Commission on 'Ceilings' are more damaging: "The programme of ceilings set out in the Plan has been diluted in implementation. There were deficiencies in the law and delays in its enactment and implementation, resulting in large-scale evasions." (*Ibid*, page 131).

It would be worthwhile finding out how Maharashtra stood in this context.

Official Assessment

The Planning Commission published in August 1966 "A Review by the Land Reforms Implementation Committee of NDC". Land Reforms of Maharashtra State were reviewed by Sri Ameer Raza, Joint Secretary of Ministry (Planning Commission) in May, 1964 and his observations were further reviewed on September 29, 1964. This review by a senior member of the bureaucracy is quite revealing. Some relevant excerpts for Vidarbha region are given below.

The 8 districts of Vidarbha are governed by the

Bombay Tenancy and Agricultural Lands (Vidarbha Region and Kutch Area) Act, 1958. It has been modified by at least six amending laws, from time to time. Following principle deviations from the main Western Maharashtra Act, can be cited:

(a) Maximum rent varies from three to four times the land revenue. No provision for "suo motu" (of their own accord by the Government) action for commuting crop-share rents into cash rents.

(b) Out of about 131.69 acres of land in Vidarbha, 27.017 lakh acres were recorded under tenants. Although the act was brought into force on December 30, 1958, "the progress made so far is very unsatisfactory".

(c) The number of "surrender" cases instituted since 1958-59 is about 62,511, involving an area of 5.26 lakh acres. The area, resumed by the landlords is reported to be 1.8 lakh acres.

(d) "In a majority of cases, the landlords take possession of surrendered land, even before verification is done. In 62,511 cases, it was found that the landlords possession was not lawful but the landlords continue to be in possession as it was decided not to evict them." (Emphasis added).

(e) "No care seems to have been taken to keep a check on the action under section 13 (providing for commutation of crop share rent into cash rent) or a number of other important sections."

(f) "Section 32 obliges the landlords to give receipt for rent. Sec. 117 provided for a fine upto Rs 100 for failure to give a written receipt. It is admitted that landlords generally do not give receipts. However, no penalty under sec. 117 appears to have been imposed in any case. (Emphasis added).

In summing up, Sri Raza concludes: "It appears that on the whole, most of the work of implementation of this Act has yet to be carried out." (Pages 88 to 93, *Implementation of Land Reforms, Planning Commission, August, 1966*).

Eye-wash of "Ceiling"

However, it is in the matter of enacting and implementing the law of Ceilings that the Government brazenly gives out its "pro-landlord" orientation.

The quantum of ceiling was fixed at a very high scale (being 18 to 127 acres). Even the ceiling on

"future acquisitions" is very high—being two-thirds of the ceiling on existing holdings. It would be difficult to assess the ceiling limits of other States with deeper analysis but even a cursory glance will prove that the ceilings of Maharashtra are *highest* in India. We give below the ceilings of some of other States:

State	Ceiling on Existing Holdings	Ceiling on future holdings
Maharashtra	18 to 126 acres	3 of existing ceiling
Assam	50 acres	50 acres
Bihar	... 20 standard acres (s. acre varying from 1 to 3 acres)	20 standard acres
Gujarat	... 19 to 132 acres	19 to 132 acres
Kerala	... 15 to 36 acres	15 to 36 acres
Madhya Pradesh	25 standard acres (1 s. acre varies from 1 to 3 acres)	25 standard acres
Mysore	... 27 standard acres	27 standard acres
Punjab	... 30 standard acres	30 standard acres
Uttar Pradesh	40 acres of fair-quality land	Same (40 acres)
West Bengal	... 25 acres	25 acres

(Source: Planning Commission, 1966)

The claim of "progressiveness" of the Maharashtra Government stands self-exposed on this front. As is evident, it has put extremely onerous and high scales of ceilings.

However, it is in the matter of *implementation* of the ceiling Act, that the Government does not even care to hide its contempt for its own laws and proclamations.

The Ceiling Act of 1961 came into force on January 26, 1962. When the Bill was before the Assembly, it was officially claimed that not less than 11 lakh acres of surplus land would be available. The amount of compensation was estimated at about Rs 16 crores. But when the Review commenced in 1964, it was discreetly admitted that surplus area might be round about 4 to 5 lakh acres! Naturally, the amount of compensation came down to about seven crores rupees.

For the review of first two years of operation of this Act, one may again refer to the Report of Sri Ameer Raza (May, 1964). He writes: "Upto March, 1964, 9,661 returns were filed by the land-owners. It is estimated that the number of surplus holders, who failed to submit Returns would be about 8,990, (total number of cases thus being 18,651). Enquiries have been started in 1,309 cases. Decisions have been taken only in 259 cases. Out of these 259 cases, no surplus land was found in 98 cases....." (*Ibid*, Page 94)

No comments are necessary for this eloquent

testimony of a Central Secretary on the performance of the Government of Maharashtra.

The latest position (that is, August 1966) appears to be that a total of 1.96 acres of land has been declared surplus. Only 67,500 acres are taken possession of under the laws. Bulk of this area comprises sugar factories and hence, this land has been entrusted to Maharashtra State Farming Corporation..... "Co-Operative Farming" is only a vote-catching slogan and 'land to the tiller' a pleasing stunt which works with masses!

"Coop Farms"—Maharashtra Style

It was at Nagpur in Maharashtra that the Congress session in January 1959 (under the Presidency of the present Prime Minister) proclaimed the creed of "Co-operative Farming"! It was then considered to be the "logical culmination" of the land reforms and the ultimate of the slogan of "Land to the Tiller". Let us see the Cooperative Farms in operation, after almost ten years of Nagpur Resolution.

Co-op Farming is no longer a part and parcel of "Agricultural programmes" of the State. It is perfunctorily dealt with, in the head of "Co-operation" in the Annual Plans (after 3rd Five Year Plans). The Annual Plan (1966-67) of the State speaks of Co-operatives thus:

"In the 3rd Five Year Plan, 300 co-operative farming societies in Pilot Project areas and 675 societies outside Pilot Project areas were to be organised. As against this, 677 societies (229 Pilot and 448 outside Pilot) were registered upto 31.3.1965. These societies had 92,539 acres of land under their command." (*Annual Plan*, Page 84)

The Official Report for 1967-68 and 1968-69 continues:

"The scheme of Co-operative farming is proposed to be continued during the year 1968-69. During the 3rd Five Year Plan period, pilot projects of co-operative farming were located in almost all the districts of the State....."

"As on 30th June, 1967, there were in all 1,180 co-operative farming societies (402 Joint Farming and 778 Collective Farming), with a total membership of 27,100. Total area under command of these societies was 1,79,057 acres, out of which, 1,06,457 acres were actually brought under cultivation during the year 1966-67." (*Outline of Activities, Govt of Maharashtra*, Page 104)

Where are these 1,190 cooperative farms? How are they working? How are they organized and who constitute these 27,100 members? There is no information, no indication of the functioning of these "farms". In practice, the farms are not even "show-pieces". To the discomfort of the administration, these eye-sores continue to exist and draw on the State exchequer. Even here, the maximum drain is on the Central funds. In the budget plans for 1966-67, for organising a total of 130 co-operative societies (farming), a financial outlay of Rs 28.17 lakhs was proposed, of which Rs 20.30 lakhs was in Central Sector and Rs 7.87 lakhs in the State Sector.

However, to assess the "progress" of co-operative farming, the Government of India appointed a Committee of Direction in July, 1963. It submitted its Report in September, 1965. The main findings of this Committee are given below:

"The Committee of Direction has drawn attention to the point that the programme has been officially inspired and guided in most areas. *Bigger farmers have sometimes dominated the societies* and non-viable societies have been formed in some areas. Moreover, technical and financial support has not been forthcoming in adequate measure either from the Government or from co-operative societies." (Emphasis added)

From personal experience, it can be claimed that the findings of this Committee are too mild when applied to Maharashtra. The so-called 'co-operatives' merely help the Government to decry the slogan of 'collective farming' and despair the farmer, the small-holder and the landless labour with its workings.

Not surprisingly, co-operative farming finds no place in the strategy of Government of Maharashtra relating to Agriculture, in the 4th Five Year Plan (whenever it may be launched). It is not for nothing that after the experience of 15 years of planning, the Planning Commission laments: "Land Reform has been too often regarded as something extraneous to the scheme of agricultural development and implemented in isolation. It needs to be re-emphasized that it is an integral part of the programme of agricultural development." (4th Five Year Plan, Draft Outline, p. 131)

This was way back in August, 1966. The "new" Approach to the still-born 4th Plan (Latest edition—May, 1968) merely repeats the platitudes: "Land reforms acquire an added importance in the present context. It is more than ever necessary to bring about a sense of security for the tenant—the share-cropper in particular—and provide greater incentive for him to increase production from the land he cultivates. The gaps in tenurial legislation should be quickly filled and tenancy laws and other measures of land reform should be properly enforced." (Approach to 4th Five Year Plan, May 1968, page 13)

Government of Maharashtra has enunciated its new Strategy in Agriculture. It is defined in the Annual Plan of 1966-67 thus:

"(1) Undertaking/promoting development programmes (irrigation, land reclamation, soil conservation),

(2) Production/distribution of essential supplies (fertilizers, seed, pesticides, machinery, cement etc),

(3) Undertaking measures for increasing the efficiency (research, extension etc),

(4) Economic incentives (such as remunerative price, adequate marketing facilities and subsidies),

(5) Undertaking institutional reforms with a view to creating conditions conducive to greater investment in agriculture." (Annual Plan, 1966-67, page 24)

Mark the strategy. "Institutional Reforms" get the last place. This is not accidental. Besides,

reforms should be conducive to "greater investment in agriculture". This is nothing but a manifestation of crudely capitalist farming on semi-feudal economy of poor Maharashtra. That it runs counter to loud slogans in Congress Election Manifesto of 1967 does not worry our Planner. This "strategy" has nothing to offer to our peasantry, nothing to solace the rising mass of very poor and landless agriculturist, nothing to accord the priority to the human factor in agrarian economy. It is a ruthless strategy to achieve "greater production". To the misfortune of the Planners, production is ultimately a "human-process" and therefore, the human-less process of higher production is bound to fail.

Indeed, nationalist and patriotic elements among Indian economists are already perturbed over this phenomenon. The Indian Society of Agricultural Economics, arranged a Seminar on the Problems of Small Farmers, in Bombay during March, 1967. Sri V. M. Dandekar (Director, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Poona), in his scholarly Foreword (written during May, 1968) gave expression to his apprehensions:

"... There is evidence of a certain reversal in the politico-economic thinking: Wider acceptance among the policy-makers of the 'production-first' philosophy and consequent neglect, or at least, postponing of the problems of distributive justice. In an unequal distribution of land, as at present prevails, a large part of the land remains in large farms and hence is not subjected to physical deterioration. Indeed, because of surplus over subsistence, which these farms create, conditions exist in them for a rapid agricultural development and expansion of agricultural production. On the other hand, only a small proportion of land remains in small farms and suffers deterioration under pressure of population it supports."

Sri Dandekar does not hesitate to admit that productive efficiency of small farmer is quite low. He continues: "It is true that, in the bargain, a large population is thrown on a small land surface and is condemned to live below subsistence, causing progressive deterioration in its productive efficiency."

The genesis of the current *Agricultural Revolution* (sic!) is thus clearly revealed.

The "Revolution" thrives on "unequal distribution of land."

The "Revolution" blesses large farms and concentrated landlordism;

"The "Revolution" condemns a greater number of farmers to live below "subsistence level"; and

The "Revolution" curses the great majority of Indian Kisans to a state of rapidly descending level of poor productivity and consequent poorer living.

The monster of this "Revolution" has made the task of poor peasants doubly difficult. Formerly, it was in the interests of the ruling party to speak of "land to the tiller". Today, if the implementation of this slogan means dis-possession of the firmly entrenched landlord classes from power and pelf in the villages, then, the ruling class has no need for this slogan. It may not even pay lip-service to the old stunt. The only "institutional" basis for the ruling party is the landlord family-farm and it is to

its preservation and strengthening that all plans and policies seem to aim at.

Even in purely economic terms, Sri Dandekar puts the problem in the following perspective: "There is apparently an immediate choice to be made between *protecting land and protecting human beings from physical deterioration. The choice is undoubtedly difficult to make but is made more readily now than it was a few years ago.*" (Emphasis added)

It is in this background that he have to consider the agrarian crisis of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra.

Army of Small-Farmers

We rely on National Sample Surveys (latest available rounds) to find out the percentage distribution of all "Cultivating Households" and "Cultivated Areas" in Maharashtra.

The average size of land holding in Maharashtra comes to 12.87 acres (against an all-India average of 7.39 acres). The break-up is given below, along with the all-India averages:

(In percentage)										
	Below 1 acre		Upto 5 acres		From 5 to 15 acres		From 15 to 50 acres		Over 50 acres	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
	Households	Area	Households	Area	Households	Area	Households	Area	Households	Area
Maharashtra	4.89	0.19	37.36	6.70	34.56	23.86	24.26	49.20	3.27	19.97
India	11.34	0.71	57.03	15.85	29.95	32.71	11.33	37.31	1.33	13.83

The facts revealed by this Table need to be carefully noted. The inequality of land-ownership should be understood with its economic and social and political implications. Thirty-seven percent of our cultivating households have only about 6½ percent of land with them. It need not be said that this land must be of very saturated and unproductive quality. If the medium farmer is to be looked after, then, we find that all those who own land upto 15 acres, form the great majority of about 73 percent of farming-households. However, the land with them is only 30½ percent.

The remaining about 70 percent of land is owned by those who have more than 15 acres of land with them. However, medium farms predominate with 50 percent of land with this section of one-fourth of entire farming class.

The seeds of current class domination and power structure in our villages can be seen in this Table.

Sri V. S. Page, Chairman, Maharashtra Legislative Council had submitted "An Integrated Area Development Scheme" for small holdings in Maharashtra. The official report admits that in 1952, there were 43 lakhs land holdings in Maharashtra, of which, 20 lakhs (or over 47 percent) of holdings were in the size-group of "below 5 acres." But, in the above Table, we find that the size-group of below 5 acres now holds only 37 percent of holdings. What happened to the 10 percent of small-holders (below 5 acres)? Have they become holders of larger

holdings? Indeed, not. Surely, they must have become landless labourers, of which, Maharashtra holds the largest number in India and Vidarbha takes the place of distinction (sic) for housing the maximum percentage of them.

And from 52 lakh cultivators in Maharashtra in 1952, we had 87 lakh cultivators in 1961—a rise of about 67 percent against the population rise of only 22 percent.

This mystery is solved when we consider the composition of agricultural classes of Maharashtra.

Census of India, 1961 (Vol. I, Part II and Vol. X, Part II-A) gives the following percentages of Agricultural workers :

Class	Maharashtra			India		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Cultivator	40.68	54.81	46.11	51.45	55.76	52.80
As Agricultural Labour	18.12	32.91	23.80	13.41	23.86	16.72

Almost, one-fourth of total labour force of Maharashtra is agricultural labour (against his Indian counterpart of 16½ percent). It should be remembered here that the labour force comprises here of mostly Scheduled castes, tribes and other backward minorities (including Muslims).

Regional composition of agricultural classes of Maharashtra was given as under (compiled from Census of 1951):

Region	(In percentage)			
	Cultivators	Tenants	Agric/ Labour.	Landlords
Konkan ...	45.9	44.5	7.2	2.4
Western Maharashtra	75.2	6.5	16.0	2.8
Marathwada	60.3	7.0	28.6	4.1
Vidarbha ...	49.3	8.8	38.6	3.3

There is no reason to assume that the percentages have undergone any substantial change.

Even this percentage of 38.6 percent is partially correct. On the one hand, small farmers are already reduced to the status of poor labourers but technically, they continue to be classified as "cultivators." Secondly, the composition of former CP districts of Bhandara, Nagpur, Wardha and Chanda slightly change the character of percentage. If agri-

cultural labour of the districts of Amravati, Yeotmal, Akola and Buldhana are taken into account, it will be established that about 50 to 55 percent of the population constitute agricultural labour.

Curse of "Urbanization"

Economists agree that there is direct relationship between the size of a town (average) and the impact of urbanization. Let us find out about this unreal urbanization of regions of Maharashtra.

Region	Density per sq. mile	Average size of village	Average size of town
Konkan Western	358.3	678.00	13,202.8
Maharashtra	277.8	826.3	17,340.5
Marathwada	202.0	612.9	11,618.7
Vidarbha	206.4	479.6	21,819.3

Thus, Vidarbha has the smallest village and relatively the biggest town. Everyday, there brings an agonising pressure on the village people as the swelling ranks of agricultural labour and the famished farm labour flocks to towns. Villages get smaller and smaller while towns explode with populations. Vidarbha thus testifies to the classical example of utter agricultural destitution.

Probing "Production" Projects

So far, we have considered the "human" side of the story of our agriculture. We now turn towards its material side—the story of agricultural production of Maharashtra and Vidarbha.

Nearly two-thirds of Maharashtra's population lives on agricultural and allied activities. In 1955-56, they contributed about Rs 331.6 crores (roughly 33 percent) to the State income. At "constant prices" (of 1955-56), this amount has risen to Rs 407 crores in 1966-67 (when the total income of

from *Maharashtra State Budget*, published by Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Year: 1968-69).

Even at "current prices, the rise in agricultural income is small. At these prices, the State income rose from Rs 1,004.2 crores in 1955-56 to Rs 2,230.8 crores in 1964-65. However income from agriculture rose only to Rs 879.7 crores (which forms only 39.4 percent of the total State income). (Source: *ibid* p. 13).

This is not accidental. As the Techno-Economic Survey of National Council of Applied Economic Research pointed out in 1963—"Productivity levels (of agriculture in Maharashtra) are poor even by Indian standards...The average output per acre was only Rs 76, compared to Rs 123 in India. The availability of a larger area per capita does not fully compensate for the low productivity of land." The same Survey points out that notwithstanding a more favourable land-man ratio, the net output per agricultural worker is only Rs 254, as against Indian national average of Rs 343.

Our crop pattern is basically unsound and unremunerative. Most of our land is dominated by Jowar, Bajra and other low value crops. Out of 45.4 million acres of cropped area, 57 per cent (about 26 million acres) are under millets and pulses. These crops, on an average, yield less than half of the value per acre of wheat, about one-fifth of rice and one-twentysixth of sugarcane. We have large areas under cotton and oilseeds but here the yields are lowest in the world.

The proportion of our cropping patterns would be evident from the Table below entitled "Percentage of Area under Major Crops" when compared with the all-India averages.

The tall talk of gradual rise in agricultural production is exposed when we take into consideration the total area of Maharashtra under principal crops and the gross production. The Table below entitled "Area and Production of Principal Crops in Maharashtra" gives these figures.

Percentage of Area under Major Crops

	Rice	Wheat	Jowar	Bajra	Total Cereals	Pulses	Oilseeds	Cotton	Sugarcane
Maharashtra	6.3	4.4	31.0	10	54.4	13.6	7.7	14.2	0.48
India	22.0	8.2	12.2	8.1	61.0	15.7	8.4	5.3	1.20

(Source: Techno-Economic Report: NCAER, 1963)

Rs 1,004.2 crores of 1955-56 rose to Rs 1,562.9 crores in 1966-67). Thus, we see that while the State income rose by 50 percent in 11 years (at constant prices), the increase on the Agricultural Sector was only 22.7 percent. (Figures are taken

There has been some changes in crop patterns. Sugarcane area has increased. More land is being cropped for other major crops. But despite the rise, the production statistics show no rise. As a matter of fact, these figures speak of not only stagnation

Area and Production of Principal Crops in Maharashtra

Area Figures: In Thousand Hectares								Production Figures: In Thousand tonnes										
Rice		Wheat		Bajra		Jowar		Tur		Gram		Sugarcane		Cotton		Groundnut		
A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	
1955-56	1182	1198	932	400	1742	446	5738	2333	560	405	494	185	91	683	2355	136	1034	718
1965-66	1281	893	905	305	1576	330	6038	2339	554	261	336	78	154	1054	2663	181	1053	550
1966-67	1346	1085	917	376	1722	404	6153	3157	520	260	346	107	154	1068	2600	193	1050	475

(Source: *Maharashtra: An Economic Review*, 1967-68, Bureau of Economics & Statistics, Government of Maharashtra)

but even positive deterioration.

NCAER Study put all-India average yield of Cotton (lint) at 86 lbs per acre. Maharashtra average is only 62 lbs; although, it provides one-fourth of national cotton produce. Vidarbha's average yield of cotton lint is 66.6 lbs and that of groundnut at 563 lbs (when national average is 665 lbs and that of Maharashtra State at 594 lbs).

Stagnation is a bad state in economy and socially very repugnant but that alone describes the condition of our agriculture. With 3-year moving averages, NCAER study points out that our yield per acre of cotton in 1950-51 was 71 lbs, that of Groundnut 586 lbs; and it rose to 76 lbs in cotton and decreased to 522 lbs of groundnut in 1957-58.

The results would be obvious. Hunger and destitution would be widespread. National Sample Survey on Consumer Expenditure reports (1960-61 to 1964-65) show Maharashtra's Rural side as the most hungry part of India. If population is distributed on the basis of monthly expenditure in rural areas, then, 41 percent of rural Maharashtra spends less than Rs 15 per month per capita (against all-India rural average of 38 percent. Expenditure ranges between Rs 15 to Rs 34, would cover 54 percent of rural Maharashtra (again, at below subsistence level), while Indian average for the same sector would be 50 percent.

The same NSS Survey pointed out that in Maharashtra, total percentage of population "under-nourished" rose from 18 per cent in 1960-61 to 32 per cent in 1962-63 and remained constantly at that percentage of 32 percent upto 1964-65. Seven percent of our population is termed as living under "high level of under-nutrition" and some 25 percent under "medium level of under-nutrition". Naturally, the percentage of rural population is more affected.

This, in fact, is the reality of the "most advanced state" of India. This is the stark condition of our agriculture. The NSS Survey has recorded that even in 1964-65, cereal yield (Kg per hectare) of Maharashtra remained lowest in India (being only 570 kgs against all-India average of 817 kgs) and attributes this to be "some cause" for this extraordinary under-nourishment.

Bureau of Economics and Statistics records that *gross value* of all agricultural produce from all crops and cash crops of Maharashtra were as under in the year 1961-62.

	Value in Rupees	
	All Crops	Cash Crops
(a) Western Maharashtra	782	293
(b) Konkan	679	137
(c) Marathwada	833	255
(d) Vidarbha	794	149
For Mahara htra	766	210

No more proofs are now needed to establish without an iota of doubt that agriculture in Maharashtra in general and in Vidarbha in particular has remained stagnant—if not going downhill—and that

the years of planning did little to transform the countryside.

Irrigation

There could be one saviour—the water. It can compensate for the soil, climate and other agronomical considerations which reduce the agriculture of Maharashtra to penury. Western Maharashtra—at least some part of it—has shown that water can make man work wonders. Maharashtra's productivity of sugarcane is already competing with the developed countries of the world.

But the subject of irrigation is a long and bitter history of broken promises and utter neglect in Maharashtra and more particularly in Vidarbha. We give below regional percentages of *gross* irrigated areas to gross sown area in Maharashtra:

Irrigation Table

Region	Percentage	
	1960-61	1961-62
Konkan	4.74	4.87
Western Maharashtra	10.87	10.99
Marathwada	3.61	3.57
Vidarbha	5.64	5.46
Maharashtra State	6.47	6.46

(Source: *Quarterly Bulletin of Economics & Statistics* Vol V, No. 4, (Jan-March, 1965), Govt of Maharashtra).

It is true that against the all-India average of irrigation of about 20 per cent, Maharashtra suffers very badly and the question is national in character. But, for the present, we confine our study to the State level and try to find out whether the percentage of Vidarbha fully conform to the reality of the region.

This "high" percentage is arrived at, by adding the traditionally wet and irrigated areas of Chanda/Bhandara district. It would be necessary to find out the district averages of irrigated lands, since in the whole of Maharashtra the districts of Akola and Yeotmal present the worst picture of having only 0.4 percent land under irrigation.

District-wise percentages (for the year 1961-62) are given below for the region of Vidarbha. Source is the same as above.

Buldhana	1.78	Akola	0.44
Amravati	1.04	Yeotmal	0.40
Wardha	1.48	Nagpnr	5.30
Bhandara	23.58	Chanda	13.80

What happened in the decade of the Agricultural Revolution? In 1952-53, a gross area of 23 lakhs was under irrigation in Maharashtra, with shares, of Konkan, W. Maharashtra Marathwada and Vidarbha being Rs 3, 11, 3 and 6 lakh acres respectively. After 10 years, in 1961-62 the State total became Rs 30 lakh acres. The share of regions in this year was: Konkan: 4 lakh; Western Maharashtra: 15 lakh; Marathwada: 4 lakh and Vidarbha 7 lakh acres. The percentage to gross cropped area of gross

irrigated area was 5.7 percent in 1952-53, and in 1961-62 for Vidarbha, it slightly fell down to 5.5 percent. Consequences of 3 five year plans ?

Let us find out more about the irrigation projects of Vidarbha.

Balance Sheet of Two Decades

The irrigation potential of Maharashtra State is put at an optimum level of 30 percent by Irrigation Commission in 1962.

Commonsense dictates that areas with irrigation percentages of only one percent or less than one percent must be given urgent and utmost priority. Delay would only enlarge the regional imbalance and distort the State economy.

In practice, following is the list of major and medium irrigation projects for Vidarbha so far. Very minor schemes are not considered here but would be covered by total area under irrigation.

(1) Buldhana	Nalganga Project: Stage I: Area irrigated by wells (61-62)	Total 21,600 acres 3,300 "
(2) Akola	Katepurna Project (1971) Ekburjee Tank Area irrigated by wells 61-62	20,640 " 7,500 " 8,200 "
(3) Amravati	Project: Area irrigated by wells 61-62	Nil 17,400 "
(4) Yeotmal	Project Area irrigated by wells 61-62	Nil 6,900 "
(5) Wardha	Bor Project Stage I (Time ?) Area irrigated by wells 61-62	23,000 " 13,100 "
(6) Nagpur	Pindarbodi Tank: Ramtik Tank Wells	2,130 " 20,330 " 36,000 "
(7) Bhandara	Itiadh Project (Time ?) (including part of Chanda) Bagh River Project (jointly with Madhya Pradesh) Chandrapuri Tank Bodalkasa Tank Chokhamara Tank Well irrigation 61-62	80,000 " 61,000 " 12,961 " 12,915 " 12,607 " 4,700 "
(8) Chanda	Dina Nadi Project (Progress held up due to foundation difficulties) Nalleshwar Tank Asolamenda Tank Ghorajheri Tank Well irrigation	30,500 (ultimate) " 4,526 " 17,591 " 10,446 " 3,200 "

However, the story of callous neglect does not end here. The well irrigation tells a more sordid tale as evidenced by the statistics of Irrigation Commission of 1962. The top Table on page 24 gives the numbers of wells in use, *as well as in dis-use*, districtwise, in Vidarbha Region. It is not necessary to comment on these figures which are very eloquent on their condemnation of the administrative machinery.

In this shocking tale of "un-used wells", lies hidden the apathy and neglect of administration and frustration and despair of the agriculturist in this region. For other areas of Maharashtra, there are other sources of irrigation and wells play a minor role (only 1.5 percent of the total of about 6 percent). But for six districts of Vidarbha (excluding Chanda and Bhandara), irrigation salvation lies only through wells and will continue to be so for many decades to come. Why then this inexcusable indifference?

There is a deeper charge. Unfortunately, there exists no reliable Ground Water Survey in Maharashtra. Well irrigation remains unreliable and erratic. After compilation of the figures, Morsi taluq alone of Amravati district must have added many new number of "dis-used wells" as in that taluq, wells are going deeper and then become economically unremunerative and inoperative.

Techno-Economic Survey of our State by NCAER, forcefully asked for such a Survey for Underground Water. Here are relevant extracts of this Report:—

"...To get a reliable assessment of ground water potential, it would be necessary to take up a systematic geological survey for the specific purpose of locating promising groundwater regions and the volume of water which can potentially be tapped in each. The need for such a Survey in Maharashtra gains urgency in view of the fact that the possibilities of surface irrigation are likely to be exhausted within the next 2 decades." (page 27)

Vidarbha's Irrigation Potential

It is undeniable that Maharashtra's potential for irrigation is severely limited. Irrigation Commission puts the optimum percentage for the State at 30 percent to 26 percent. NCAER Survey says—that—"taking all sources of irrigation, it may be possible to provide assured water supply to 9.975 million acres (or —20 percent of the total crop area)." (Page 29)

But for the parched and thirsty soils of Vidarbha, even a percentage of 20 percent (against its existing negligible percentage of 1 or 1½ percent) appears a bounty of great magnitude. What are the chances of Vidarbha getting this much water for irrigation?

Maharashtra State Irrigation Commission (1962) made the following estimate (centre Table on 24) of the River Basins for Vidarbha and adjoining regions.

Wells in Use and Dis-Use in Vidarbha (Irrigation)

Regions	Name of Taluq	% of area irrigated	Wells in USE	Wells in disuse	Name of Taluq	% of area irrigated	Wells in use	Wells in disuse
BULDHANA:	Mehkar	0.7	3,399	1,562	Malkapur	1.2	3,434	1,076
	Khamgaon	0.3	3,434	1,076	Jalgaon	0.3	637	838
	Chikhali	1.4	4,777	1,335				
	DISTRICT	0.8	13,610	6,838				
AKOLA	Akola	0.1	239	691	Akot	0.4	880	2,006
	Balapur	0.1	183	263	Washim	0.3	962	1,623
	Mangrulpir	0.2	291	91	Murtizapur	0.2	425	608
	DISTRICT	0.2	2,980	5,282				
AMRAVATI	Amravati	0.5	1,735	1,805	Chandur	0.6	2,094	571
	Morsi	1.6	6,352	73	Daryapur	0.3	995	952
	Achalpur	1.0	1,062	883	Melghat	...	5	11
	DISTRICT	0.5	12,243	4,295				
YEOTMAL	Yeotmal	0.2	877	801	Darwha	0.2	1,964	995
	Pusad	0.2	740	353	Kelapur	0.2	617	611
	Wani	0.1	120	88				
	DISTRICT	0.2	4,318	2,848				
WARDHA	Wardha	0.9	2,424	3,677	Arvi	0.9	2,660	3,818
	Hinganghat	0.3	714	3,175				
	DISTRICT	0.7	5,798	10,670				
	Nagpur	1.6	3,830	4,239	Ramtek	0.7	1,637	1,608
NAGPUR	Umrer	0.2	772	1,708	Katol	4.2	8,080	4,772
	Saoner	3.1	5,125	3,372				
	DISTRICT	1.7	19,444	15,699				
	Bhandara	0.4	2,350	1,345	Gondia	0.2	4,541	986
BHANDARA	Sakoli	0.2	1,804	571				
	DISTRICT	0.3	8,695	2,902				
	Warora	...	1,217	788	Chanda	...	1,250	864
	Brahmapuri	...	980	549	Sironcha	...	429	89
CHANDA	Gadchiroli	0.2	2,698	509				
	DISTRICT	0.1	6,574	2,793				
	Total for Vidarbha:		73,662	51,327				
	Total for Maharashtra:		4,80,768	1,04,443	(Source: Irrigation Commission, 1962)			

River Basin	Total Area in State		Area actually irrigated at present by surface sources (Lakh Acres)	Area which can be brought under irrigation (Acres in Lakhs)
	Geographical Area (Sq. Miles)	Culturable area acres (Lakhs)		
Wainganga (including Wardha & Painganga sub-basins):	32,630.7	208.61	5.46	30.14
Tapi Basin	19,995.2	133.09	0.59	12.93
			(62.2%)	(15.6%)

NCAER Survey presents the facts, borne out of this data in a more economically comprehensible manner. The "Present" and "Potential" of our river basins of Vidarbha are presented by this Survey in the following manner:

Irrigation—"Present" & "Potential"

(Area: In '000 Acres, Value: in Rs Crores)

Region	Present (1956)			Potential			
	Gross cropped area	Gross irrigated area	Value of farm output	Gross cropped area	Irrigated area	Conserved area	Value of farm output
(a) Tapi ...	7,939	233	58.6	8,194	2,150	4,900	127.4
(b) Wainganga	3,211	523	35.3	3,251	1,230	200	74.6
(c) Wardha	5,409	62	34.8	5,664	1,060	2,660	86.3
Total:					4,440	7,760	288.3

(Source: NCAER Survey, Table 17, Page 220)

And who exactly will benefit from this staggering figure of almost 45 lakh acres of land in Vidarbha, coming under irrigation and even with 1956 prices, being rewarded with about the 288 crores? Irrigation Commission estimated the following figures districtwise:—

(Culturable Area)

	Wainganga Basin	Tapi Basin
(1) Buldhana	9,43,100 acres	9,08,900 acres
(2) Akola	7,79,900 acres	12,81,100 acres
(3) Amravati	6,86,600 acres	11,87,500 acres
(4) Yeotmal	21,24,500 acres	nil
(5) Wardha	11,22,300 acres	nil
(6) Nagpur	14,97,100 acres	nil
(7) Bhandara	10,61,300 acres	nil
(8) Chanda	16,14,500 acres	nil

(Source: Irrigation Commission, Table 15).

In this context, we will examine the relationship between irrigable acreage per mcft (million or megacycle ft) and the alternate cropping intensities in different river basins of Vidarbha and Maharashtra.

(A) TAPI & Crop Pattern I:

WARDHA 5 p.c. perennials, 30 to 40 p.c. two
55-65 p.c. other seasonals, Acres
seasonals: per mcft: 8

Crop Pattern II:

10 p.c. perennials, 30-40 p.c. two
50-60 p.c. other seasonals, Acres
seasonals: per mcft: 6

Crop Pattern III:

15 p.c. perennials, 30-40 p.c. two
45-50 p.c. other seasonals, Acres
seasonals: per mcft: 5

(B) WAING- Crop Pattern I:

ANGA 0 p.c. perennials, 100 p.c. seasons:
(Mainly rice) Acres per
mcft: 12

Crop Pattern II:

5 p.c. perennials: 60 p.c. rice crop,
35 p.c. miscellaneous, Acres
per mcft: 8

Crop Pattern III:

10 p.c. perennials: 60 p.c. rice crop,
30 p.c. miscellaneous Acres
per mcft: 6

(One mcft, includes evaporation losses in the reservoirs and seepage losses in canals):

(Source: NCAER Survey, Table 14)

This slightly technical data has been necessary to be reproduced even at the danger of boring the reader since the question of "irrigation potential" of Vidarbha has been made a matter of ridicule by the rulers for the last many years and the people of

Vidarbha have been repeatedly fed on the lies that nature is against it and nothing can be humanly done to restore and resurrect the balance. These figures nail down these lies.

It is indeed admitted that the whole of Maharashtra needs national priorities in order to bring its irrigation potential at least at par with the national average of 19 percent at the earliest opportunity. At the same time, it is equally imperative to stress that Vidarbha region legitimately claims a lion's share in all irrigation grants of the Central and State outlays, in order that its alarming regional imbalance in irrigation is corrected at the earliest.

Government of Maharashtra has been claiming through constant publicity that it is spending very heavily on irrigation potential of Vidarbha. Official records state otherwise. In the first two five-year Plans (I and II), Western Maharashtra got nine major irrigation projects, at a capital cost of Rs 59 crores (approximate). Area commanded under irrigation for the same came to 7½ lakh acres. And Vidarbha? During this period, it got six "major" projects, at a capital cost of Rs 22 crores (to be invested in full) and the area to be under irrigation command 2 lakhs 40 thousand acres. The outlays on "minor irrigations" are too insignificant to be taken into account (being Rs 30 lakhs and 2,700 acres for Western Maharashtra and Rs 80½ lakhs and only 12,550 acres in Vidarbha). (Source: Table 32, Irrigation Commission Report of Maharashtra).

It is thus on the strength of these facts that this Government is accused of neglecting the irrigation requirements of Vidarbha. The problem is gigantic and demands herculean efforts on a war-footing. Mere tinkering with the problem with fringe benefits is all the more deplorable.

Other Indicators of Decay

Price Policy is the second most important element (after irrigation) which makes or mars the economics of Indian agriculture. Being a very weak and almost un-viable link of this delicate chain, agriculture economy of Vidarbha precariously hinges on the support of price to eke out its bare existence and while doing it, puts into play the classic feud of worker versus the peasant!

Much has been written about this phenomenon and it is not necessary here to recount the basic tenets of this policy which must be made to protect and safeguard the interests of agriculture. However, to illustrate the phenomenon, we take the conditions of two years (1960-61 and 1961-62) for the peasants of Vidarbha to find out the operation of this lever for pauperization of peasantry.

Maharashtra—An Economic Review—1967-68 points out that if the percentage of production of cereals in 1955-56 was 100, then, it rose to 145.5 in 1960-61 and to 120.7 in 1961-62. In this light, we find out what our Vidarbhan cultivator got from his land and labour in these two years (for which, district-wise figures are available):

District	Gross Value of agricultural output per cultivator (in Rupees)		Gross Value of agricultural output per hectare (2.47 acres), of area cropped (in Rupees)	
	1960-61	1961-62	1960-61	1961-62
Buldhana	1,064	797	353	262
Akola	1,230	843	321	219
Amravati	1,666	1,123	388	261
Wardha	1,322	907	345	238
Yeotmal	1,203	767	331	207
Nagpur	1,082	938	452	393
Bhandara	636	633	510	500
Chanda	623	703	385	434
For VIDARBHA	978	794	380	306
For MAHARASHTRA STATE	847	766	393	350

(Source: *Quarterly Bulletin, Economics & Statistics*: Vol. V. No. 4 (Jan-March, 1965, Govt. of Maharashtra)

The first two columns indicate the concentration of landholdings. The next two columns are important to the problem of prices and production. For cultivating 2½ acres of land, gross return is only 300 Rupees! If the most minimum "expenses of cultivating one hectare" are taken into account, the privation and abject poverty of Vidarbha cultivator would be self-evident.

How Far Technology Can Go

Better and more efficient methods of agriculture are always welcome. No one can deride the breathtaking scientific advances being made in the science of agronomy and everybody will welcome the fullest possible use and application of these practices.

But how far could it go? Hybrid seeds give vigour and vitality to the produce but at the same time, they demand better management, more capital investment and greater outlays in agriculture. How tragic that in our given situation, the benefits of such wonderful scientific improvements should be reaped only by the big landlords and big farmers and our mainstay of poor and small holder and agriculture labour should become not only disenfranchised with this performance but in the bargain, be forced into greater poverty!

Modern machinery on farms, modern practices for cultivation, increased application of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, weedicides—will apparently increase the agricultural output in India. However, such practices would also give birth to a host of new problems.

The social problem of increased production is already dealt with. And that is the *crucial* problem. You cannot sustain agricultural growth with the help of technology and a handful of big landlords and farmers, while rural majority carries on subsistence-level farming. This is just not possible.

The second aspect of this problem relates to Vidarbha. So far, technological break-throughs in agriculture have all been based on the adequate application of water. And we have seen that Vidarbha offers no such "input." Consequently there would be little reward for such innovations of modern farming for our region.

Again, modern methods of farming are synonymous with 'heavier capital investment'. Modern farming is inconceivable without a very high level of liquid capital and investment of huge outlay in fixed assets of varying degrees (soil improvement, irrigation systems, farm machinery, heavy doses of fertilizers, pesticides etc). This presupposes streamlined machinery of farm credit. The local co-operative sector is utterly unable to cope with this vast and complex problem of agricultural finance. The scheduled banks are making a show of entering agricultural finance to remove the stigma of serving only the industrialist monopolists and commercial tycoons. But it is obvious that the *small farmer* will be considered completely unworthy of bank credit. His solvency is considered doubtful and standards of "credit-worthiness" cannot be applied to him. Naturally, the earmarked funds of agricultural finance will thus be usurped by the big landlords and big farmers.

Root Cause and Remedy

I cannot help reproducing here the famous passage from the work of Gunnar Myrdal the renowned Swedish sociologist—*Asian Drama*, a book which produced many frowns and discomforts in administrative circles of backward Asian countries. He writes:

"The obstacles to rapid economic expansion in South-Asian countries are rooted in inefficiency, rigidity and inequality of established institutions and attitudes, and in economic and social power relations."

This, in a country like ours, all apparently "economic" problems are essentially *human and social*. Agriculture is an entirely social question and nowhere it is so evident as in the land of little hope, *Vidarbha*. The regeneration of Vidarbha agriculture in particular is impossible without social solutions. Technological tinkering will only aggravate the issue and rapidly put the correct catharsis on the agenda. An extremely heavy burden thus lies on the shoulders of democratic, patriotic and freedom-loving people and their political-social parties of Maharashtra.

The Myth of the Third World

KWAME NKRUMAH

There is much talk these days about the need for "rallying the Third World to ward off the dominance of the two Super-powers," and that India should take the initiative in this direction. In this context, it may be worthwhile knowing the views of Kwame Nkrumah, at one time one of the leaders of the non-aligned world. The following article appeared in the British Left-wing journal, Labour Monthly (October 1968)

THERE is much loose talk and woolly writing about the so-called Third World. To some it means all the developing nations; to some it suggests the coloured peoples of the world; others think of it as referring to a vague, amorphous mass of uncommitted peoples, the oppressed and exploited of the earth who are neither 'east' nor 'west' but who are a kind of third, neutral force in the world.

To Frantz Fanon, the 'Third World' clearly meant the colonies and ex-colonies, and in his book, *The Wretched of the Earth*, he makes a specific case study of the problems of decolonisation. For him, the 'wretched' are those who have suffered the oppression and exploitation of colonialism. 'The Third World is not cut off from the rest. Quite the contrary, it is as the middle of the whirlpool,' and is characterised by 'neutralism.' Its people are committed to a non-capitalist road, since capitalist exploitation is their enemy. But the 'Third World' should refuse to become a factor in the fierce competition which exists between the capitalist and socialist systems, and ought 'to find their own particular values and methods and a style which shall be peculiar to them.'

Fanon did not mean non-commitment or non-alignment in the commonly-accepted sense, though both have come to be associated with the term. The very mention of the 'Third World' suggests to some a kind of passivity, a non-participation, an opting out of the conflict between the two worlds of capitalism and socialism. It is this concept which seems to have led to most of the misuse of the term 'Third World', and renders its use so misleading. There is no middle road between capitalism and socialism.

Two questions must be asked. First, does a 'Third World' really exist? Secondly, is it possible, either in terms of ideology or practical politics, in the ever-sharpening conflict between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces in the world to adopt a posi-

tion of neutrality or non-alignment?

Clearly, the 'Third World' is not definable on a racial or colour basis, though in fact most of the oppressed peoples are non-white. Is it then the apparently uncommitted or non-aligned who form the 'Third World'?

The expression first came to be widely used when two Conferences of Non-Aligned States had been held. The first was in Belgrade in 1961. There were 25 participating states and three observer countries. The cold war and nuclear arms race was at its height and there seemed a very real possibility that the world might be plunged into a war which would mean the end of civilisation as we know it. The main purpose of the Conference, therefore, was to employ all the efforts of the participating countries to bring about the destruction of nuclear stockpiles and to divert the vast scientific and technological resources at the disposal of the great powers to positive and progressive channels.

The Second Conference of Non-Aligned States was held in Cairo in October 1964. There were then 46 participating states and ten observer countries. Non-alignment seemed to be practical politics. In my address at that Conference I said:

"We are all here as Non-Aligned nations but the term 'Non-Aligned' as applied to us has not yet covered every form of policy which it connotes. We came into existence as a protest and a revolt against the state of affairs in international relations caused by the division of the world into opposing blocs of east and west. We came into existence as a revolt against imperialism and neo-colonialism which are also the basic cause of world tension and insecurity."

I went on to say that these states which claimed to be non-aligned had the right to choose the political and economic philosophy which was considered the most suitable for their rapid development and advancement. The fact that Ghana accepted social-

ism did not necessarily imply opposition to any other country or people. 'Socialism,' I said, 'does not belong to the Soviet Union or to China, or for that matter to any other country; it is an international idea.'

Many of us thought at that time that it was the duty of the Non-Aligned States to assert their full weight against the senseless build-up of nuclear weapons which threatened the whole world. With 'east' and 'west', two power blocs of roughly equal strength, poised it seemed on the brink of nuclear warfare, there appeared to be reprieve for the world only in the holding of a balance of power by some third force which would prevent either of the two sides from starting a major war.

After the First Conference, Pandit Nehru and I went to Moscow on behalf of the Non-Aligned States, and President Modibo Keita of Mali and President Sukarno of Indonesia went to Washington. Although there was no sudden and dramatic 'lessening of world tension as a result of these missions, the threat of nuclear warfare has to some extent lessened.

However, in the present world situation, with the armed phase of the revolutionary struggle well-launched in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and in the USA itself by the Black Power Movement, it is no longer possible to adopt a third position outside the main conflict. The world struggle, and the cause of world tension, has to be seen not in the old political context of the cold war, that is, of nation states and power blocs, but in terms of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary peoples. It cuts right across territorial boundaries and has nothing to do with colour or race. It is a war to the finish between the oppressed and the oppressors, between those who pursue a capitalist path, and those committed to socialist policies.

Yet old beliefs die hard. Although non-alignment is an anachronism, there are still a few politicians and heads of state who cling to the idea of neutralism and who advocate the holding of more Conferences of Non-Aligned States. Their thinking is a form of political escapism—a reluctance to face the stark realities of the present situation.

The oppressed and exploited peoples are the struggling revolutionary masses committed to the socialist world. Some of them are not yet politically aware. Others are very much aware, and are already engaged in the armed liberation struggle. At whatever stage they have reached in their resistance to exploitation and oppression, they belong to the permanent socialist revolution. They do not constitute a 'Third World'. They are part of the revolutionary upsurge which is everywhere challenging the capitalist, imperialist and neo-colonialist power structure of reaction and counter-revolution. There are thus two worlds only, the revolutionary and the counter-revolutionary world—the socialist world tending towards communism, and the capitalist world with its extensions of imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism.

Today then, the 'Third World' is neither a practical political concept nor a reality. It is merely a mis-used expression which has come to mean everything and nothing. It has been used with equal loose-

ness both by those committed to the revolutionary struggle and by those who are its deadly enemies. The Western press has gladly made use of it to serve its own ends by associating it with racism, and by equating it with concepts such as non-alignment, neutralism and coexistence. It has thus helped to prevent the full weight of the so-called 'Third World' being identified openly and decisively as part of the socialist world.

If we are to achieve revolutionary socialism, then we must avoid any suggestion that will imply that there is any separation between the socialist world and a 'Third World'. Misused and misleading political terms must be either abandoned or defined clearly. Where the revolutionary struggle is in the armed phase as in Africa, Asia and Latin America, it is particularly important that there should be the utmost clarity of political expression.

The purpose of an article I wrote in 1966 under the title 'African Socialism Revisited' published in *African Forum*, Vol. 1, No. 3, was to show that there is no such thing as 'African Socialism.' The term had come to be employed as proof of the existence of brands of socialism peculiar to Africa, such as Arab socialism, pragmatic socialism, and this or that socialism, when in fact there is only one true socialism: scientific socialism.

I do not deny the existence of the struggling 'wretched of the earth,' but maintain that they do not exist in isolation, as a 'Third World'. They are an integral part of the revolutionary world, and are committed to the hilt in the struggle against capitalism to end the exploitation of man by man.

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Mao's "Dark Forces"

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHINA watchers observe that this year Mao Tse-tung is far more troubled by the situation inside the country than he was last year. The Chairman said recently that the national calamities, which the country is now living through, have been brought about by the "rampaging dark forces inside the country". Where do these "dark forces" come from?

The nineteen years that followed the proclamation of the Chinese People's Republic have seen, apart from the "Cultural Revolution", five national purges or, to use the Chinese Communist terminology, campaigns to fight "dark forces" inside and outside the party. Each one was waged under a specific slogan. Thus, the first, conducted in 1952, was labelled "The fight against three and five evils" or, in simpler terms, a fight against bourgeois elements.

The second one was waged in 1955 under the guise of fighting for socialist reforms at capitalist enterprises in the country.

The years that followed 1957 saw the third and the fourth campaigns waged inside the Party against the Rightists to defend the General Line of policies.

Finally, the fifth campaign took place in 1963 when the country was launched on a course of socialist re-education. It was this campaign that in 1966 took on the form of the "Cultural Revolution".

According to even most cautious estimates, in the course of these five campaigns at least 66 million people were purged.

The purges have always been accompanied by power rivalries. The first mass Party purge was conducted in the Yen-an period. In 1938, with the help of Kang Sheng, who was at the time in charge of a special department of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, Mao expelled from the party and liquidated about 12,000 people. Even

now Mao Tse-tung believes, as men from the small circle of intimates say, that the "dark forces" opposed to his regime constitute five percent of the Chinese population, that is, 35 million people.

Despite the mass periodic purges, at times Mao failed to force his associates to toe his line.

Thus, in June 1954 Mao encountered the opposition of Kao Kang, Deputy-Chairman of the Central People's Government, when he ordered to step up the pressure on the peasants to accelerate the collectivization drive. One of the most influential and prominent Chinese leaders said that if peasants were forced to join cooperatives this would discredit the idea of socialism and wreck production. The crisis that followed was settled not by putting the matter to the vote of the Central Committee, but by physically eliminating Kao Kang without investigation or trial on the eve of the fourth session of the Seventh Party Congress in China. To avoid any mentioning of Kao Kang, Mao did not attend the session, using his poor health as an excuse. It was by mere chance that in those years the Governor of Kwangtung Province, Marshal Yeh Chien-ying escaped the fate that befell Kao Kang.

In 1958 when Marshal Peng Te-huai and former Secretary-General of the Chinese Communist Party Chang Wen-tien openly opposed the "Great Leap Forward", which proved so disastrous for the country, they were quietly purged. However, in 1966 Mao was already powerless to purge quietly his opponents who commanded absolute majority in the Politburo, Secretariat and the Central Committee, which to a certain extent curbed his dictatorial power. It was at that time that Mao declared as counter-revolutionary all organs of power and administration from

the Parliament and the Central Committee down to provincial assemblies and Party committees at enterprises and let loose upon them the teen-age youth. This was a flagrant violation of the Party Programme.

In his Political Report to the Seventh Party Congress held on April 24, 1945 Mao wrote, "The new democratic power must be built on the principle of democratic centralism, on the understanding that the General Line of policies is to be determined by Congresses of people's deputies at different levels, which will elect organs of this power. Such power will be both democratic and centralized. Only this system makes it possible, on the one hand, to exercise large-scale democracy and invest Congresses of people's deputies at all levels with all powers and to settle state affairs in the centralized manner, on the other. Only this system enables organs of power at all levels to settle, in a centralized manner, the matters entrusted to them by corresponding Congresses of people's deputies and at the same time ensures for the people a complete freedom of democratic activities".

Eleven of the 16 members of the Politburo were either purged or subjected to repression. Among them: Liu Shao-chi, Chu Te, Chen Yun, Teng Hsiao-ping, Peng Chen, Li Ching-chuan, Tan Chen-lin, Liu Po-cheng, Ho Lung, Li Hsian-nian, and Peng Te-huai. They were all deputies and as such enjoyed immunity. The purge was conducted in violation of the Constitution, which says that no citizen can be arrested except on the decision of a people's court or the sanction of a people's prosecutor. The leaders, who dedicated all their life to the revolution, were left at the mercy of the rampaging youth as no charges were brought against them.

It is worth noting another highly significant part of the report quoted above, which says among other things that ".....in China throughout the period of New Democracy there cannot and, consequently, must not be a regime of dictatorship of one class and a monopoly of one

Party in the Government".

Now the entire political life in China is monopolized by the so-called proletarian headquarters headed by Mao, although the Constitution of the Chinese People's Republic states explicitly that the supreme organ of state power is the All-China Assembly of People's Representatives. Thus, Chairman Mao has openly betrayed not only the Party but the Red Guards, who were originally to become the backbone of a new party of Mao's followers.

"Little Generals", or "young pioneers of the Cultural Revolution" as Mao frequently referred to them, proved far more consistent than their leader. Scarcely did they demand that Lin Piao, Chiang and Mao Tse-tung himself should also admit their own mistakes, when the Chairman sent soldiers and "teams of propaganda of Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung" to schools and colleges to suppress the recalcitrant teenagers. And to make no doubt on whose behalf these soldiers and "worker-peasant teams", would act Mao gave a basket of mangoes as a gift to one of these teams and instructions to students "to accord a warm welcome to the propaganda teams, consisting of workers, soldiers and peasants and to merge with them".

Kuangminh Jih Pao in its issue of August 18 wrote that in reply to Mao's instructions the teenage Red Guards say, "If we had only known earlier that now we have to become peasants and workers, we shouldn't have lost time attending classes in secondary schools and universities. It was of no use for us to attend classes for so many years: it was of no use for us to join the Cultural Revolution".

The Red Guards and party functionaries everywhere have begun to voice a strong dissatisfaction with the fact that they are being ignored, while the role played by the military in revolutionary committees is growing. It came as a complete surprise to Mao and Lin Piao, when they set out to expel from the Committees "the militarists"—commanders of military districts.

Despite the recent instructions of Mao "to support and love the liberation army and to cement the unity of the army and the people", the problems of relations between the army, on the one hand, and the party functionaries and the Red Guards, on the other, are growing acute. So, the revolutionary committees having not yet lived long enough to celebrate their first anniversary, they are now on the brink of virtual collapse because of ceaseless faction strife and power rivalries.

The most influential Chinese daily *Wenhwei Pao* appearing in Shanghai wrote in one of its editorials: "A handful of renegades, spies, counter-revolutionaries, people taking the capitalist road, and incorrigible landlords, rich peasants, foul elements and the Rightists are using every conceivable means in an attempt to penetrate into Revolutionary Committees at all levels, and they have to be mercilessly dealt with". One can hardly admit more that the Revolutionary Committees set up in all but five provinces of China, are no alliance of forces faithful to Mao and loyal to each other.

Another Shanghai daily *Tsehsang Jih Pao* accused members of the revolutionary committees of frequently disarming the military and broadcasting from clandestine radio stations.

After this statement the pyramid of power of Revolutionary Committees so painstakingly erected by Mao began to rock. Canton Red Guards belonging to the "Red Flag" organisation, who fairly recently were ready to expose their very lives to mortal risks for the sake of Chiang Ching, are now putting up wall posters saying, "Down with the Revolutionary Committee. Down with the Military Control Commission".

In many localities the Red Guards have started an open struggle against groups of army units, contesting their power. As a result of one such armed clash Deputy Commander of the Lhasa army garrison, Shih Panchiu was killed. As was admitted by Chou En-lai, "the faction struggle tantamount to a civil war has spread throughout Tibet and

South China". According to the *Great Army* bulletin, one *Lien Chih* group of Red Guards alone during the "fighting" in Liuchow "in less than a month has fired over 5,000 artillery shells, opened fire on the bases of our great army dozens of times, which left over 1,000 houses razed to the ground in more than ten streets". The Chinese army mercilessly deals with rebel Red Guards many of whom have died before a firing squad.

In Kwangsi-Chuan region, people's volunteers attacked the "April 22" group of Red Guards after a 13-year-old boy allegedly threw a piece of mud at them. The boy was shot and the whole organisation crushed.

In Kwangchou, a Youth Army of State Salvation was formed, which periodically puts up posters urging the people to overthrow the Mao regime. The city riots have now swept the villages, where the struggle is being waged against army units pursuing a "three to clean out" policy, that is a complete requisition of grain, cotton and vegetables. Faced with virtual starvation to death, the peasants are deserting villages.

Mao's opponents possess not only arms but even radio stations. The Peking authorities have instructed the leaders of Kwangtung Province to punish severely those guilty of "murders and arsons, destruction of roads and railways and transport means, attacks on prisons and establishment of private radio stations". The Shenyang authorities were given similar instructions.

In view of the fact some army units do not always deal with Red Guards sternly enough, Mao has created within the army special armed forces, operating on the lines of a secret service. They are instructed to control and correct the behaviour of local troops, and are authorized, when necessary, to arrest commanding officers and disband army units, as well as to arrest leaders, who, in their judgement, act wrongly. The campaign is being waged under the pretext of eliminating "dark forces", which, according to Chairman Mao, are the root cause of national calamities.

Free Market Foibles

SARAL PATRA

YUGOSLAVIA'S experiment with fostering "free market" economy in a Socialist country has run into trouble. What was aimed as a rectification of the imbalances that crept into the economy in course of development, has boomeranged. The 1966 reforms providing for a "self-regulating economy" by the virtual withdrawal of the directing and coordinating role" of the State, has not only brought the economy to a halt, but also clearly indicates a process of retardation.

The new turn in Yugoslav economy, the effects of the "reforms" that have been introduced, are in many ways instructive to us in India, particularly when our Fourth Plan is under preparation. Insistence on almost similar "reforms" in our economy, demand for "decentralisation," etc. have been voiced here with much fervour. The extreme position is to do away with planning altogether. An amended version of it is what is euphemistically called "indicative" planning, wherein the State's responsibility in economic development ends with providing infrastructure and public funds for the private sector, and the "self-regulating free market" economy taking over then onwards.

Mid-1965 marks the beginning of the new "reforms" in Yugoslav economy. A series of laws were adopted which in their totality made for the acceptance of the regulating role of the market in the process of development. The directing role of the Socialist State was put in the background in the name of decen-

tralisation. The steps towards "liberalisation" in foreign economic relations—exports and imports—were meant to provide incentives for increasing production. The object, according to the official organ, *Borba*, was that the State's "directing and coordinating role should be undertaken by the economy itself."

What the reforms actually did was not an improvement or streamlining of centralised planning, removing the defects engendered by bureaucratic sloth and inefficiency, nor endowing it with the capacity to combine State control with initiative and independence to production units. On the contrary, the "reforms" paved the way for creating a "free market" with the "law of value" having an unrestricted field of operation.

The Basic Objectives

The basic objectives of these "reforms" were to tackle the problems of transition from extensive to intensive economy, the acceleration of technological progress, improvement of the quality, pattern and profitability of production, increasing labour productivity, expansion of foreign trade, etc. It was hoped that the measures adopted would uncover hidden potentials and enable the country to tap new resources for economic growth.

This new objective guided Yugoslavia to frame its 1966-70 plan of economic development. The plan in reality reflected the expectations of its authors, that were to fructify as a result of the reforms. They were more forecasts of growth based on hopes

than hard economic and financial calculations. Starting with a 9-10 per cent annual rate of industrial growth, the plan envisaged 4.6 per cent yearly increase in agricultural production. The estimate of annual rise in national income was, however, pegged at 7.5—8.5 per cent as against an average annual rise of 8 per cent achieved during 1957 to 1965.

The immediate effects of the "reform," positive as they were, heartened the Yugoslav planners. In fact, they were convinced of having chosen the right path. The inflationary trends were checked and prices were somewhat stabilised in the home market. Greater material incentives were provided for raising farm output, while stimulating concentration in industry. Above all the exchange rate of Yugoslav dinar was strengthened.

But these were as short-lived as they proved to be illusory. The "reforms" failed to check the downward trend in the economy.

Industrial output rose by as much as 16 per cent in 1964 compared to the previous year. But, in 1965, when the new "reforms" were adopted, the rise was halved to 8 per cent, and recorded a rise of only 4 per cent in the following year. The worst position was reached in 1967 when industrial output dropped by 0.4 per cent. The hurried measures to check the trend has brought about a rise of only 3.6 per cent during the first five months of this year as compared to the corresponding months of 1967. But the damage has already been done and even the better showing on the agricultu-

ral front has failed to halt the crisis. Last year, national income rose by only 0.8 per cent.

On top of reduction in industrial production, another affliction is the rise in the accumulation of unsold stocks of a number of commodities. The acute problem of selling the output is borne out by the official figures showing rise in the share of circulating funds and the accumulation of stocks of finished goods in the total production, from 46.4 per cent in 1964 to 64.5 per cent in 1967. There has been a fall in the number of factory and other workers over the past two years and the rate of growth of labour productivity in industry dropped to 1.4 per cent.

Fall in Investments

The difficulties are further accentuated by the systematic fall in investments in the economy during the past several years. Compared to preceding years, investment in fixed assets (in comparable prices) was 10 per cent lower in 1965, 12 per cent in 1966, and 9 per cent in 1967, aggregating as much as 28 per cent in the past three years compared to 1964.

Consequently, the programme of modernisation of operating plants has also fallen behind. Lack of new investments has led to the factories "eating up" their fixed assets. In 1967, the investment in fixed assets was even 1,600 million dinars lower than was necessary for normal maintenance and wear and tear replacements.

These are difficulties which cannot be overcome in a short time, much less in the two years left for the completion of the current plan. To Belgrade's *Kommunist* it was "obvious that we can no longer expect the lag to be eliminated in the remaining two years, or that the plan will be fulfilled by 1970".

One of the important postulates of the "reforms" was the regeneration of the country's economy in such a manner as to make possible a much larger volume of foreign trade and increase in foreign exchange earnings. Last year, for the first

time, factories and trade organisations were permitted to enter foreign markets independently. The expectation was that there would be a considerable increase in exports, but the result turned out to be quite the opposite. Compared to 1965, when exports rose by 22 per cent, it was only a 12 per cent rise in 1966. But exports reached a new low for several years when they recorded a rise of only 2.7 per cent in 1967.

On the other hand, there was hardly any measure to peg imports at the planned level. Last year, over-all imports went up by 8.4 per cent, in which those of manufactured goods increased 14.2 percent. This was the result of increasing the number of items in the "free imports" list which were taken advantage of by the enterprises and trade organisations.

Much of these imports were from the Western countries. In 1967, Yugoslavia's imports from the Common Market and the EFTA countries increased by 35-40 per cent over those in 1965, while its exports to them recorded a rise of only 5-6 per cent during the same period. Like all other developing countries, Yugoslavia was unable to break through the customs and quota barriers imposed by these countries, even though it opened the "sluice gates" of imports from them with no small hope of reciprocity.

Critical Position

The huge increase of imports over exports has beset the Yugoslav economy with a new critical balance of payments position. The deficit in trade balance which amounted to \$196.4 million in 1965, shot up to \$355 million the next year and reached \$455 million in 1967. The increase in invisible earnings during these years through tourism, remittances from abroad, etc., however, was far too meagre to straighten out this acute deterioration in the balance of payments curve. As a result, the Federal Government was forced to raise customs duty on imports and reintroduce certain restrictions in foreign trade relations at the end of last year. It has also added to Yugoslavia's difficulties in repayment of for-

eign loans and credits and interests on them.

The only redeeming feature in this rather dismal picture is Yugoslavia's trade with the CMEA countries of Eastern Europe. In 1966, about 55 per cent of its engineering goods exports, about 40 per cent of its ferrous metals exports, over 60 per cent of footwear exports, 45 per cent of knitwear exports, 50 per cent woollen fabrics exports, and about 15-20 per cent of its farm produce exports went to these countries.

The unrestricted flooding of the domestic market with imports of manufactured goods, has in turn plunged the Yugoslav enterprises into a new crisis. While products for exports accumulated, imported foreign goods made it well nigh impossible for them to market their products at home. It is not for nothing that they have curtailed production. Finding themselves as they do in acute financial difficulties, they have resorted to discharging more and more workers from the factories.

Domestic Hazards

The hazards of all this has been acutely felt in the domestic sphere. The substantial rise of wholesale prices of some commodities resulted in the rise in retail prices. Retail prices of manufactured consumer goods rose by 25 per cent in 1965, 23 per cent in 1966 and by another 8 per cent last year, while those of farm products by 45, 21 and 2 per cent respectively during the same period.

In order to compensate the workers against soaring prices, industrial enterprises used up a large part of the funds allocated for the expansion of production. Although there were wage rises, the average rate of growth of the increase in incomes dropped by almost 50 percent compared to 1964. Moreover, with the curtailment of consumer credits, there was less purchase by the people and the shops and enterprises found themselves loaded with unsold stocks.

The worst affected by the "reforms" is the employment position. Large deterioration in

employment started along with the introduction of the "reforms". Unemployment figures rose from 228,000 in 1964 to 267,000 in 1965, fell to 265,000 in 1966 but shot up to 291,000 in 1967. In April this year, 344,000 or 10 percent of the registered workers in Yugoslavia were busy job-hunting, while about an equal number were working abroad, mostly in West Europe.

An inevitable result of this deterioration in the economy, has been the growth of social unrest. There are reports in Yugoslav press of strikes by factory and office workers, and demonstrations by students. It has also affected the relations between different republics. Regional imbalances have continued to

grow owing to the different levels of their economic growth. For example, the republics like Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia continued to remain comparatively backward—both economically and culturally—than, for example, Slavonia and Croatia. With the "reforms" emphasising on the utilisation of own, local resources, the developed republics find more funds for their own requirements, whereas the backward ones are unable to produce them on their own. The Federal Government, in pursuant to the "reforms", has substantially reduced the volume of aid hitherto provided to these republics.

There a good number of Yugoslav economists who believe that

the slowing down of the economy is a temporary phase and inevitable because the effects of the "reforms" would take time to be felt in all the spheres of activity. In fact, according to them, the slowing down was necessary owing to the reorganisation of the economic life and the intensification of market relations.

But it would be untrue to say that such views are shared universally in Yugoslavia. Vajo Skenjic of the Presidium of the Central Council of Trade Unions of Yugoslavia, for example, feels that "if a certain economic policy cannot ensure the extension of production, secure modernisation and in this context provide more employment, then something is wrong with this policy."

SEPTEMBER 19 STRIKE

(Continued from Page 10)

special session of the ILC be called before November 1 to discuss the attack on accepted trade union and democratic rights and the large-scale victimisation. If the Government fails to call such a meeting, it has been agreed that the three organisations will jointly meet and consider next steps including boycott of all tripartite bodies.

Of course, this joint action is only limited at present. But those who know the difficulties standing in the way of any joint action on a national scale will appreciate what an advance it is. This advance can be consolidated and taken forward further. But the initial steps are important and these have been taken.

The September 19 strike has thus acted as a catalytic agent and now both the challenges and the possibilities are there. The efforts of all who want to advance the unity of the working class and to fight for democratic values so brutally violated by the Ordinances, must now be bent on taking the movement forward.

It is therefore strange to find a Socialist leader like Sri Madhu Limaye putting forward an assessment about the success of the

strike which does not materially differ from that of Sri Chavan, the monopoly press and that disseminator of lies and distortion—the AIR. What is more distressing is that he should have done it at a time when the full-scale repression and victimisation were still on and even the limited relaxation which has now been announced regarding the withdrawal of termination notices served on the temporary workers, had not been made.

All this of course does not mean that there are no serious shortcomings in the organisation of the unions which constitute the JCA, or in the conduct of the strike, or even in the struggle and tactics of movement. In some of the unions, sectarian political considerations continue to prevent the healthy growth of united, broad-based well-organised trade unions. Some of the leaders like Maniben Kara betrayed, and others were dragged along against their wishes. It is also true that unless serious efforts are made to democratise the functioning to develop close links with the rank and file, to eliminate corruption and nepotism, the trade unions will not become strong and effective. All

this however is a matter more for organisational rectification than public debate.

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crucial stage when the extremists tried to block agreement by raising objections against insertion of certain terms in the resolution like "realistic solution". They also wanted deletion of the term that the solution evolved by the Convention should not only be acceptable to the people of the State but be in accord with the aspirations of its various regions as demanded by the representative of the Autonomy Forum, Sri Balraj Puri.

Another issue that became the subject of tussle between the extremists and the moderates was whether the resolution should contain the word "future disposition of the State" or "political future", a suggestion made by Sri Mohiuddin Kara, founder-President of the Political Conference. The committee later on both the issues decided to accommodate moderate viewpoint which sealed the isolation of the extremists—who in the final unsuccessful bid wanted the approval of the resolution to be delayed till the return of Mirza Afzal Beg who had meanwhile left for Delhi to attend to his son who had been critically injured in an accident.

Having rejected the extremists' viewpoint, the resolution finally as it emerged from the steering body (it was drafted by Sri Premnath Bazaz) was unanimously accepted by the general body of delegates—with the Sheikh himself commending its acceptance in a tone and content that sharply contrasted with his militant speech at the public meeting. The Sheikh ruled out the agitational approach and went a step further by thanking Prime Minister for having rebuffed those who felt excited by his speeches. This, he said, was a beginning of realistic understanding by Indian leadership of the Kashmiri viewpoint and expressed the hope that it would be maintained.

KASHMIR State People's Convention may well mark the beginning of a steady process of

isolation of the pro-Pakistani extremists in the State's politics, provided the hard-liners, both in the country and the Government on the one hand, and the extremists in Sheikh Abdullah's camp, on the other do not queue up for an immediate show-down.

That Sheikh Abdullah is presently keen on avoiding a show-down was clear from his concluding remarks at the Convention, rejecting the path of satyagraha or agitation, even though the suggestion came from his moderate colleague, Sri Premnath Bazaz, Convener of the Convention. This was in sharp contrast to his militant posture on the second day of the Convention when he called for a "do-or-die" struggle and publicly rejected JP's suggestion for a solution within the framework of India. Notable also at the concluding session was the Sheikh's public praise for Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, a pronouncement whose significance could not be lost sight of by his extremist colleagues.

Whether the Sheikh would further fortify and carry forward this positive stance for opening the doors for a meaningful dialogue with New Delhi would itself determine if it was worthwhile to call the Convention at Srinagar. Results of the Convention do not impose any bar on the Sheikh to adopt such a positive course.

It was not without reason that the Convention refused to commit itself to any one of the different solutions presented to it by the participants as a feasible solution of the Kashmir tangle. Wisely, also, the sponsors evaded a discussion on these solutions lest it would encourage a show-down between the contestants. Despite provocations from the extremists, there was a welcome emphasis on tolerance and on accommodation of different viewpoints. It was this trend of discussion which led to the recognition that there were equally important viewpoints in Kashmir, besides those held by the secessionists.

Even though the Convention

failed to make a democratic and realistic appraisal of the Kashmir tangle, fears that it would turn out to be yet another forum merely for airing secessionist views, proved wrong, largely because of the qualitatively higher standard of the arguments by those who opposed the secessionist slant in the demand for the right of self-determination. From the inaugural address of Sri Jaya Prakash Narain, who made a plea for a solution within the Indian framework, to viewpoints put forward by the representatives of the Jammu Autonomy Forum, Communist Party, Swatantra Party, and men like Sri Premnath Bazaz, one-time advocate of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan, the pro-India viewpoint went down with telling effect, while demarcating itself from those favouring the merger of Kashmir within the Indian Union. In the absence of the Congress and the Jana Sangh at the Convention, it was the moderate viewpoint favouring autonomy within the Indian Union that successfully clashed with the pro-secessionist extremists who merely aired their oft-repeated standpoint asserting that Kashmir's accession to India was not a settled fact.

This "equilibrium" of extremist and moderate standpoints reflected by the resolution may well prove to be the starting point for a long debate at the popular level and, as Sheikh Abdullah himself put it a beginning for wresting the initiative by the Kashmiris from others. But this initiative will pass back to the people of the State only when the extremists' hold on the Sheikh's own camp has been weakened for it to merge with the broad country-wide Kashmir front for a democratic and realistic solution of the problems facing this troubled State.

To bring this about, Sheikh Abdullah himself will have to act with determination and promptitude, coming out of the grooves of the Valley and take his rightful place in the wider arena of Indian politics.

Observer

Discussion

In this week's discussion on Czechoslovakia, the first contribution is by Dr P.C. Joshi of the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi. With it comes the continuation of Scrutator's Reply to Professor Susobhan Sarkar's A Polemical Note which appeared in last week's Mainstream (October 19, 1968). The first part of Scrutator's contribution appeared last week. A relevant passage from British Marxist leader, Palme Dutt's comments in Labour Monthly (October 1968) is also included.

Socialists Must Think

P. C. JOSHI

THE armed intervention of the Soviet Union and its allies into Czechoslovakia and the continued bullying by them of the Czechoslovak leadership to ensure conformism has dealt a grievous blow to the cause of socialism.

It was the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party which first exposed to public view the seamy side of socialism in the first Socialist State of the world. But the fact that the grim revelations as well as the urge for correction had come from within the socialist system itself seemed to hold the promise of a new turn in the socialist movement. There was, it seemed, wide support to the new wave in the Soviet Union and the Socialist countries as well as in the socialist parties of the non-socialist countries. This appeared to indicate that the urge for a reorientation of socialism emanated not from a small section of non-conformists and heretics but from a wide section of the leadership of socialist parties in many countries. But the hostile and aggressive reaction of the Soviet Union and its allies to the Czech movement for reform has belied this hope.

The Czechoslovak leaders were only proposing to give practical shape to the aims first initiated in the Soviet Communist Party's Twentieth Congress.

In spite of the tremendous risks and uncertainties facing them as a small country, they have had the courage to initiate the process of self-questioning, to recognise the deformities of the socialist system and to involve the creative forces of their entire society in the task of self-correction and restructuring of socialism. Will the Czech events mark the close of the era of stagnation and the beginning of a new creative ferment, a fresh search for a new vision and perspective of socialism? Or, will the flame kindled by the Czechs be extinguished by the dark forces of conservatism which seem to be still entrenched in the socialist world? This is the crucial question which disturbs every sensitive socialist today.

For the outcome to be positive, there is only one way out. The process of debate and discussion must not remain confined only to the ossified sects; it must embrace the widest sections of the thinking people. In particular, the involvement of the young forces in a fresh debate on the major issues arising out of the present developments is the only guarantee of a sustained socialist renewal. The first step is to identify the issues which are of fundamental relevance to socialism and to tackle them neither with self-satisfied smugness nor with

cynicism but in a truly scientific spirit. An attempt has been made in this contribution to raise two such major issues arising out of the developments in Czechoslovakia.

The first basic question posed by recent events pertains to the relation of national sovereignty with socialist internationalism. Closely related to this is the question of the permissibility of divergent models of socialism within the framework of socialist solidarity.

It has generally been recognised except by the diehards that the intervention by the Soviet Union and its allies constitutes a clear violation of the national sovereignty of the Czechoslovak people; it has naturally caused deep injury to their national pride. But the tragic irony of the situation is that this violation of their sovereign right to determine their own destiny has occurred under the ideological cover of 'proletarian internationalism'. It is, therefore, natural to ask whether there is something fundamentally wrong with the concept of proletarian internationalism and how far this concept is compatible with the national sovereignty of a country? If one goes deeper into the problem one would find that it is not that socialist internationalism and national sovereignty are incompatible or that the pursuit of compatibility between the two

is less desirable after the Czech experience than before. In fact, in a world full of the potential for aggressive confrontation between powerful nation-states, the enlightened pursuit of national sovereignty along the path indicated by the interests of internationalism is the only hope for mankind. But the two are certainly incompatible, nay, irreconcilable if internationalism is interpreted in terms of explicit or implicit imposition of hegemony of one big and powerful country or the other over the weaker group of countries.

This vulgarisation of internationalism has indeed two dangerous consequences. In the first place, it leads to the erosion of the genuine spirit of internationalism and the growth of Big-nation chauvinism in the country which exercises this hegemony. Secondly, also in the other countries and their socialist parties which explicitly or implicitly accept this hegemony it erodes both genuine nationalism as well as internationalism. It suppresses genuine independence of thought and action and the courage for innovation. It alienates the socialist parties from the mainstream of national life in these countries and tends to convert them into ideological and, to some extent also, organisational appendages of the country which plays the hegemonistic role.

The Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, under pressure within and from other parties, seemed to reject this concept of hegemony and to affirm the principles of genuine internationalism. But the self-righteous manner in which the Soviet Union intervened in Czech affairs and the absence of even a feeble protest against its action throughout the length and breadth of the Soviet Union only shows that the dominant section of the Soviet Communist Party

is still far from abandoning its hegemony and that vast sections of the Soviet people have been nursed and conditioned over

these years not in the genuine spirit of internationalism but of Big-nation chauvinism.

(To be Concluded Next Week)

Czechoslovakia—Two Trends

THE foundation of the Republic of Czechoslovakia, whose fiftieth anniversary we celebrate this month, reflected two trends. On the one hand, it represented a victory of the popular national liberation struggle of the Czechs and the Slovaks against Hapsburg rule. On the other hand, at the top, it represented the installation in power of the anti-Marxist, anti-Communist, anti-Soviet leadership of the Czech bourgeoisie, headed by Masaryk and Benes, closely tied to Western imperialism. Masaryk had been a prominent opponent of Marxism from the beginning of the century; and Plekhanov had conducted a famous polemic against Masaryk's critique of Marxism. Previous to 1914 he had sought a deal with the Hapsburgs; 'we cannot be independent outside Austria', he wrote in 1909. In 1915 he sought to bank on a deal with Tsarism and sent a secret memorandum to the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, proposing the establishment of Czechoslovakia as 'a monarchical state' with 'a Russian dynasty.....The wishes and intentions of Russia will be of decisive importance' (quoted by Benes in Volume 3 of his *The World War and Our Revolution*).

After the victory of the Bolshevik revolution Masaryk became a principal agent of anti-Soviet intervention at the head of the Czech Legion in Russia, financed from London and Paris. The Versailles Powers established the Republic of Czechoslovakia

under Masaryk to become, as a satellite of French imperialism, the key base of the Little Entente of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Rumania organised by French imperialism to provide an anti-Soviet bastion. In 1919 Masaryk as President of Czechoslovakia dispatched Czechoslovak troops, in association with Rumanian troops, to invade Socialist Hungary, at the instigation of the Entente, in order to crush the socialist revolution in Hungary.

That was one side of Czechoslovakia, the side of the Czech bourgeoisie, represented by Masaryk and Benes. But the other side was that of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, a great mass party inheriting the majority of the old Social Democracy, inspiring the devotion of the Czech and Slovak workers, and representing the true future of the country.

This class contradiction at the heart of the record of Czechoslovakia still has its echo in the changed conditions of today; and the danger signal of the old bourgeois conservative tradition endeavouring to masquerade as part of a democratic renaissance became visible when, in the process of the really necessary democratic renewal, attempts were made in some quarters to carry through a resurrection and glorification of Masaryk and Benes and a denigration of the entire era of Communist leadership.

—R. Palme Dutt in Labour Monthly, October 1968.

Sri Lajpat Rai's concluding article on Latin America was not received in time for the press. It will appear in next week's Mainstream.

Reply to Prof Sarkar—II

SCRUTATOR

IN the section of his Note, entitled, "Review of the Arguments", Prof. Sarkar says "I have come across five types of arguments—often interlocked with each other" to justify Warsaw Powers' military intervention into Czechoslovakia. He lists them as follows, and dismisses them one by one: "Strategic Self-Defence"; "Suppression of Actual Counter-Revolution"; "Curb on Possible Counter-Revolution"; "Response to Appeals for Help"; and "Inherent Dangers in the Action Programme."

Let us examine Prof. Sarkar's presentation of each of these arguments.

On the question of "strategic self-defence", Prof Sarkar first takes up the question of the sovereignty of a State; "It is no argument for the Soviet military action to say that sovereignty is an outmoded notion. More convincing reasons must be adduced in justification of the military measures adopted."

The point to note here is that nowhere have the Soviet authorities nor those who have supported the Warsaw Powers' intervention made the sweeping statement that "sovereignty is an outmoded notion". What is implicit in their stand is that the inviolability of the frontiers of a socialist state as part of the socialist system cannot be regarded in *absolute* terms. In this respect, Prof Sarkar himself has given the answer, when he says: "True, a forcible entry into another country cannot be condemned in every case—interventions, like war, can be just or unjust." He then justifies Soviet occupation of East Poland in 1939, the Finnish campaign of 1940 and the Red Army's intervention in Hungary in 1956.

Both the Polish campaign of 1939 and the Finnish campaign of 1940 were clearly preventive operations on the part of the Soviet Government, to forestall Hitler capturing strategic regions in the periphery of the Soviet frontiers. While Prof Sarkar justifies these actions he takes a

strangely contradictory position when he comes to Czechoslovakia: referring to the Soviet action in Czechoslovakia, he says, "a mere preventive operation on this score is nothing but a return to the discredited 18th century diplomacy unworthy of Socialists."

Why this contradiction on Prof Sarkar's part? The reason for this is to be found not in his logic but in his political understanding and—with all due deference to his great scholarship—in his ignoring the lessons of European history.

After quoting the examples of Poland (1939), Finland (1940) and Hungary (1956), Prof Sarkar says: "In the present case, the position is definitely different, and the precedents have no applicability." His argument is that in 1956, "Suez had thrust us onto the very brink of general war and Russia had hardly yet attained atomic equality with the USA." In contrast, he says: "Is not the obvious Soviet-American anxiety itself for 'detente', beneficial to world peace, a real factor in today's over-all situation?"

Here lies the crux of Prof Sarkar's understanding: according to it, in 12 years from 1956, the Soviet Union has attained such strength and the world imperialism has been so decisively weakened that its capacity to undermine, disrupt and finally to dismember a socialist state cannot be regarded as a possible danger at all. In other words, he seems to think that in the present epoch, the Socialist system having become the decisive factor in the development of society, the threat of imperialist aggression against any socialist state is not to be taken as a valid ground for military intervention.

This is disproved by the experience of Vietnam itself where US imperialism's non-stop bombing seeks to destroy all the edifices of socialism in the north.

By Prof Sarkar's logic, the very existence of the Warsaw Pact becomes superfluous, since the Warsaw Pact is meant not only for defensive action but also

preventive operation to foil imperialist design. Prof Sarkar's thesis about the anxiety for *detente* seems to underplay the danger of imperialism. It may be worthwhile also to note that the Moscow Statement of the 81 Communist and Workers Parties, November 1960—which coined the concept of "the new epoch"—makes a very pertinent formulation:

"Today the restoration of capitalism has been made socially and economically impossible not only in the Soviet Union but in the other socialist countries as well. The combined forces of the socialist camp reliably safeguard every socialist country against encroachments by imperialist reaction."

This assessment is careful enough to guard against the idea that a socialist country on its own strength can withstand the onslaught of imperialism: only the combined strength of the socialist camp can ensure that.

There is another example of extraordinary logic in Prof Sarkar's Note: he says that "with in a couple of hours of any West German invasion, the Soviet armies poised on the frontiers could have moved in, without a protest from any Socialist quarter." By this argument, the Soviet authorities should have voted for the choice of a full-scale war in preference to their present preventive action. For, if the Soviet armies were to be locked up in armed combat with West German forces, the danger of world war would have been immediately put on the agenda. It is precisely this consideration which Israel is now exploiting, holding on to her fruits of blitz aggression. What Prof Sarkar is really prescribing is that (a) either the Soviet Union should have launched war on West Germany (only a stepping stone to world war), or (b) if the world war is to be averted, then let West German forces hold on to their initial gains—may be Sudetenland—and thereby demonstrate the futility of waking up too late.

Prof Sarkar further says: "One must also ask whether the USA has the same geopolitical

urge as Hitler's drive for conquests....." Here he forgets the world-wide interest of US in combating the forces of socialism. Otherwise, where is the geopolitical compulsion of US to get bogged in Vietnam? Or, to undertake world-wide subversion through such agencies as CIA? In reality, Washington's world-wide anti-Communism is much more powerful than Hitler's desperate drive.

In discussing what he calls "the strategic self-defence" Prof Sarkar, strangely enough, did not touch on the strategic importance of Czechoslovakia at the very centre of Europe's two contending camps. It is presumptuous on the part of the present writer to remind a distinguished professor of history of Bismarck's famous saying that he who held Bohemia held the key to Europe. At the time of the foundation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918, the French imperialism had the grand plan of getting Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Rumania as a Little Entente against the Soviet Union. But this plan collapsed with Hitler's offensive and finally with all the three countries turning socialist,

thanks to their liberation by the Red Army.

In fact, the imperialist powers have always regarded Czechoslovakia as strategically more useful than Hungary and Poland in their plans against the socialist system. From Johnson's idea of "building bridges to Eastern Europe" to Strauss' "Grand Design", all regarded Czechoslovakia as crucial for their objective of dismembering the socialist system in Eastern Europe.

Prof Sarkar has also made the suggestion in case USA came to West Germany's help: "If the American help is only indirect, an effective counter-pressure is open to the Soviet Union in stepping up massive aid to bombed Vietnam, which would meet indeed with world-wide acclaim. And if the Americans actually intervene, would that not mean a world war to be fought on air when the famous strategic value of Czech territory will evaporate into nothingness?"

The implications in this formulation are worth noting. First, it implies that the Soviet Union is still not giving massive military aid to Vietnam—a charge which

is reported by even Western sources, and repeated by none except the Chinese. The second implication is that the next world war would be fought in the air and so any land mass has lost its strategic importance: however, no military expert has so far said that there would be no scope of fighting on land in any future world war. The experience of the post-World War II period so far shows that occupation of strategic areas and bases institute the major preoccupation of the imperialist powers, necessitating counter-measures by the socialist countries.

Here the logic seems to have got the better of the reality in Prof Sarkar's understanding. The US interest need not take the form of direct intervention: it would mainly underwrite any West German adventure, while its apparatus of subversion, of *sub rosa* operations, would work full steam in a strategically important bastion as Czechoslovakia.

This brings us to the question of the danger of counter-revolution in Czechoslovakia.

(To be Concluded Next Week)

1962: WHERE THAT GUILT LIES (Continued from Page 16)

making war. The Chinese must be delighted. This is because, as the size of our defence forces grows, as we acquire more patents or ready-made items and more and more highly sophisticated weapons, so the number of the hungry and the illiterate grows; national industry recedes and so it costs more to buy food. This is just what any opponent wishes for us; because it brings with it more envy, hatred and squabbling, communalism and regionalism within our country and less will to rise and be doing, shoulder to shoulder.

Thus the rise by three-fold of our defence budget, far from being a safe sign of readiness, is the path that leads downwards. Nor are those border roads of the great order of *strategic* value that so many of our parliamentarians are given to believe. Certainly these roads help us to bring these areas *socially* into the orbit of the 20th century and for that, they are excellent; but strategically they are (a) liable to be disrupted

(b) far easier to move down than to move up!

To make, ones stand absolutely clear, here is what General Sergei Shtemenko says in his book "*The General Staff in Time of War*" in support of his arguments to show that the Soviet government and forces were ready for Hitler's invasion:—

"Thanks to the fulfilment of five year development programmes, we had all the necessary material and technological requisites for routing any foe, and the war proved that this was indeed so. We had built up our own metallurgy, which was powerful for that time, and, had come close to Germany as regard steel and pig-iron production. Soviet steel output in 1940 was above 18 million tons, whereas steel production in Germany was slightly over 19 million tons; we were making approximately 15 million tons of pig-iron whereas Germany was making only 14 million tons. The third Reich had a certain advantage as regards the genera-

tion of electric power (approximately 68 million kilowatt hours in Germany as against the 48 million kilowatt hours generated in our country) but at the same time Germany was lagging far behind us in ore extraction."

Lastly, the idea that our Air Forces could play any strategic role beyond support of ground forces and limited carriage of goods and men, is nothing more than a pipe dream. Here one must have a dig at Manekar for lauding our acquisition of "*Vikrant*" the Aircraft carrier. It must be frankly stated that today such a ship is purely a symbol, otherwise it is nothing but a white elephant.

I would not say that Manekar's *The Guilty Men of 1962* has any contribution to make to our knowledge or thinking on our frontier security. It is, however, interesting reading attractively written. It would have helped to have a map attached; the book is full of dozens of names of obscure places.



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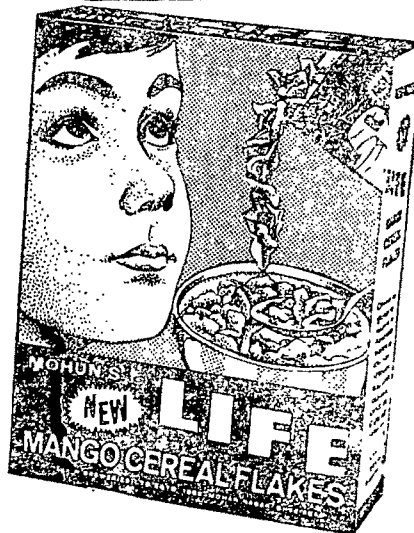
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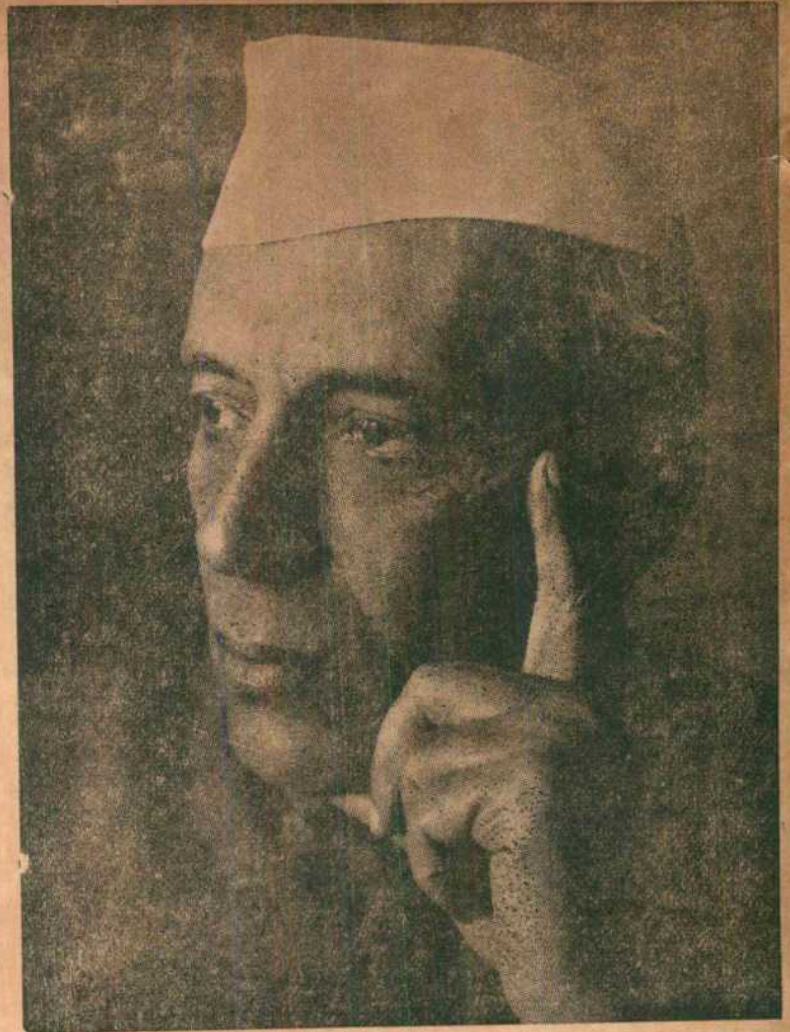
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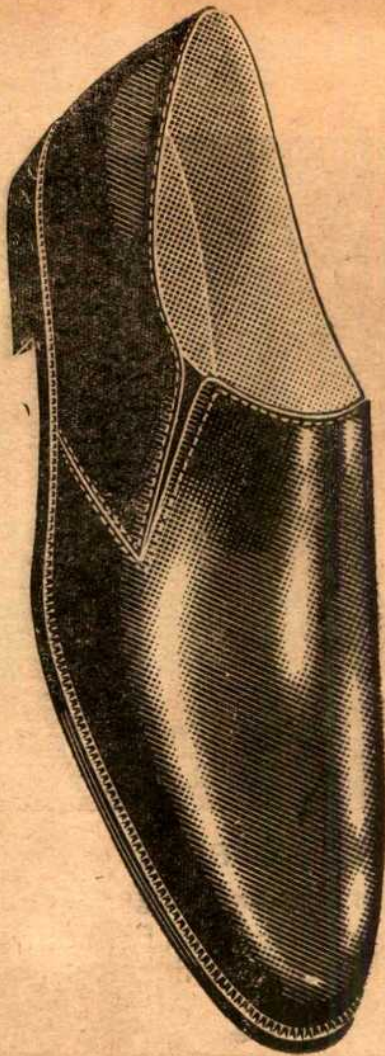
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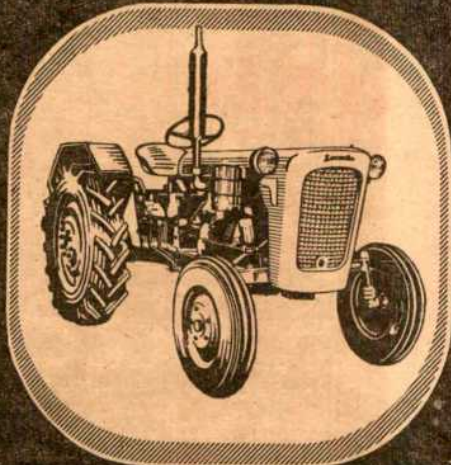


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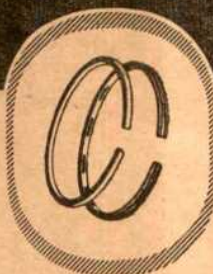
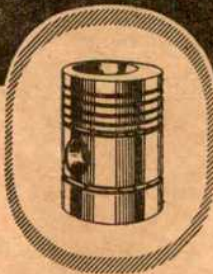
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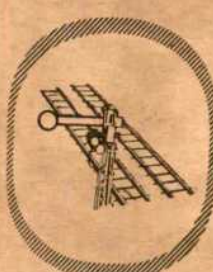
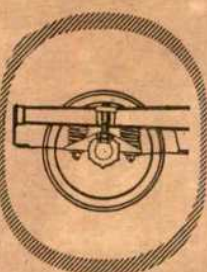
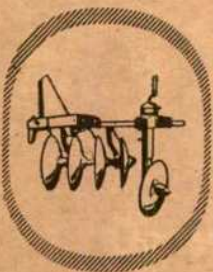
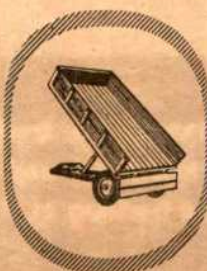
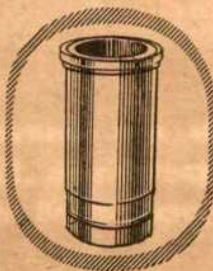
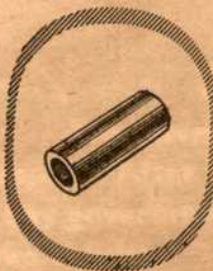
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CENTRE AND STATES: THE WAY OUT

THE angry confrontation that has been developing for the past two months between the Union Home Ministry and the Kerala State Government is a matter of serious concern for all those interested

in safeguarding democracy in this country. The controversy is almost reaching a point of crisis, and unless statesmanship of the highest order is displayed by those in power at the Centre, an almost mortal blow will be dealt to the very fabric of the Indian Constitution.

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The issue at stake is not merely that of meagre food allocations to Kerala or the posting of the Central Reserve Police in the State, or even the application of the Centrally-promulgated Ordinances. So far, there has been no case of any breach of the letter of the Constitution on the part of the Nambudiripad Government. What has been complained of is that the Kerala Ministry has not conformed to the "spirit" of the Constitution as understood and interpreted by the Central Government. As for interpreting the spirit of the Constitution, there is legitimate ground for difference of opinion, and there is no provision by which those in power at the Centre can arrogate to themselves the prerogative of interpreting this spirit as they think fit. This is all the more so today when the Central and State Governments are ruled by parties which have come to power through the ballot box with different political outlook and understanding, ideologies and interests. Our Republic is a federation which formally lays down a constitutional set up based on a Union of States. The very powers that have been granted under the Constitution to the State Governments show that the direction of development of Indian democracy envisages the exercise of the

important functions of State by the State authorities and they are not supposed to be effete Governments without any substance of power. It is because of this that such an important portfolio as law and order has been specifically allotted under the Constitution to the State authorities.

Under the circumstances, there is hardly any room for taking up the hectoring posture that the Union Home Ministry has been taking in the last two months in its dealings with the Kerala Government. With its political authority truncated by the diminishing returns at successive polls, the Congress leadership has to realise that it no longer commands the undisputed hegemony that it used to twenty years ago. At the same time, having been entrusted with authority at the Centre, it is its bounden duty to set new norms of democratic functioning in accordance with the new political realities prevailing in the country. The writ of the Congress leadership no longer runs through the length and breadth of this country. Other parties have come to power in different parts of the country commanding the majority support of the electorate in their respective States. In such a situation, it is absolutely necessary for a Government professing to be democratic to readjust its policies and outlook so that a new type of consensus can be evolved for the smooth and efficient functioning of the democratic set-up. It has no business to interpret the Constitution from its narrow Party angle; nor can it any longer take it for granted that others will accept its version of the "spirit" of the Constitution. It is lack of understanding of this new reality that has been leading Sri Chavan almost into a dead end in his dealings with the Nambudiripad Ministry.

Another Central Minister too has demonstrated an amazing lack of sense of responsibility. Despite being the Law Minister, Sri P. Govinda Menon has been holding out totally unwarranted threats during his recent tour of Kerala—even going to the absurd

length of threatening to send the army to suppress the State Government. It is preposterous that he should be allowed to go scot-free by his more responsible colleagues at the Centre.

The latest report that the Union Home Ministry is planning to push through Parliament a law enabling the Central Reserve Police to exercise the right of prosecution, arrest and detention in lock-up while posted in an area under the jurisdiction of a State Government, is disquieting as it poses a very serious threat to democracy. It would amount to setting up a parallel police force, making a mockery of the State Governments which are responsible for the maintenance of law and order under the Constitution. It is time that the Prime Minister and the Central Government as a whole ponder over the implications of such short-sighted proposals. Whether they can manage to get a majority in Parliament is not the main point. The point to note is that the State Governments will resent it and fight it tooth and nail, and the yawning gap in Centre-State understanding may be made dangerously wider.

In these circumstances, the wisest course for the Centre would be to advise the President to establish an inter-State Council as provided for under Article 263 of the Constitution. This Article clearly states that such an inter-State Council could settle many of the thorny questions in the relations between the Centre and the States. It will not only give the State Governments a forum to ventilate their point of view with cogency and without passion, but also provide the Central authorities with opportunities to help bring about a consensus through persuasion and emphasis on mutually beneficial measures. The initiative for setting up such a Council must be taken by all those at the Centre who have the good of the Indian nation in mind. This is the only way left under the Constitution for ending the growing tension between the Centre and the State Governments.

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COMMUNALISM: TOTAL COMBAT, NOT HALTING ACTION

THE discussions at last week's meeting of the Standing Committee of the National Integration Council revealed a greater readiness among the participants to face the facts squarely than was the case at the Srinagar session of the Council where pre-occupation with politeness prevented many from being forthright about the ugly truth that communal riots are planned and executed by organised gangs wearing respectable political or cultural labels.

At Srinagar some of the participants did refer directly to the role of the RSS and the Jana Sangh, but the consensus appeared to be against such plain speaking. At the Standing Committee meeting in Delhi, however, the members appeared to feel less inhibited, probably as a result of the realisation that the forces of communalism as well as other divisive elements cannot be fought with kid gloves. Even so, the conclusions that have emerged do not go far enough to be effective in dealing with the communal and other organisations which, with ample financial assistance from mysterious quarters, are engaged in wrecking national unity in different regions of the country.

The current controversy over the influence of the RSS in Banaras Hindu University focusses attention sharply on one of the worst aspects of the activities of communal organisations, namely, the systematic and diabolical attempt to poison the impressionable minds of the citizens of tomorrow. That the RSS should be functioning within a university

campus, reportedly with a building allotted to it and clearly with the blessings of the most powerful of the university authorities, is enough to cause deep concern among all those who believe that the educational system should lay the foundation for the building of the secular, democratic India of the future. While the goings-on in BHU have come into the open, it is well known that RSS elements are quite active in other universities as well. There are many so-called teachers who are in fact agents of the communal organisations and whose aim is to corrupt and poison young minds to the maximum extent possible.

Nor is this confined to the RSS and other communal groups alone; in certain regions educational institutions are being used for sowing the seeds of separatism and hatred on the basis of regional or linguistic slogans. Distortions and falsehood have found a place in textbooks of schools and colleges. There can be no doubt that such a development has been possible only because of the connivance, or at least tolerance, of the State Governments and the indifference of the Centre. It is not as if the facts were unknown to these; often enough complaints have been made about the kind of mischievous propaganda going on in schools and colleges. In some cases some newspapers even published extracts from textbooks containing material calculated to spread mutual disaffection between segments of the Indian people.

So far as the recurrence of communal riots is concerned, the Government has in its possession enough evidence to show that these are planned and engineered by organised groups, that the riots are the result of diabolical central direction, that those who instigate them have plenty of money at their disposal. Those who have investigated the origins and course of some of these riots, particularly those in Meerut and Ranchi, have come to the conclusion that many influential local officials, including several in the police department, played a harmful role; they either deliberately refrained from taking action against those organising loot and murder, or helped the goonda elements in one way or another.

In the case of commissions set up to go into the background and consequences of communal riots in particular places, there has been evident a reluctance to take the position that the majority community has a greater responsibility to maintain peace and harmony than the minority community. It has been pointed out for instance that the Raghubar Dayal Commission which went into the Ranchi riots has tried to strike a balance between the two communities despite the fact that it was the minority community which suffered heavily. The Dayal Commission report suffers from the fatal defect that it is more or less a balancing feat and not an earnest attempt to trace the root causes; this is perhaps because of the composition of the commission and the procedure,

it adopted. The methods adopted for the trial of a group of persons facing specific charges cannot obviously be useful in dealing with a situation in which one community lives in constant dread. The Dayal Commission was content to go into the immediate causes of the disturbances at Ranchi; in all these cases it is easy to discover that a minor incident led to a conflagration, but not so easy to uncover the vast ramifications of the communal organisations and their modus operandi. The Dayal report is unsatisfactory as a guide for future action precisely because it does not deal with the deeper causes as well as the powerful organisation which brought about the riots not only in Ranchi but in many other parts of the country also.

The same tendency to appear to deal "even-handedly" is seen in the latest prosecutions against a handful of newspapers launched by the Central and State Governments. It is clear that action has been initiated only against a fraction of the Hindu communal newspapers, and to balance this a few Muslim papers are also being proceeded against. While no one can say that communal newspapers should go scot free, it is necessary for the government to realise that, unless the large number of papers run by majority communalists are all dealt with firmly, its earnestness and bonafides will be in doubt.

In this background the NIC Standing Committee's clear-cut recognition of the dangerous nature of the "Hindu Rashtra" theory being sedulously propagated by the very elements behind communal riots and its emphasis on India's secular nationhood must be deemed most welcome. It amounts to an indictment of RSS and its political arm, the Jana Sangh, which have been propagating this dangerous theory calculated to keep the Indian people divided on the basis of religion in direct contravention of the secular democratic Constitution that the people of India have given themselves. Sri Jayaprakash Narayan underlined the harm being done by the elements which were rewriting Indian history with

a communal bias. A false picture of Hindu-Muslim discord through the ages had been presented by interested British historians, and this was being painted in darker hues by present-day communalists in the field of education. Other members also referred to the dangerous ideas being propagated by the RSS in order to destroy the very roots of Indian nationalism.

In every centre where communal disturbances flared up, RSS cadres were found active; and certain Jana Sangh leaders have been found to have made inflammatory speeches earlier. When it is known that certain specific groups have played a part invariably in all of these outbreaks, it becomes difficult to understand what is preventing the authorities from taking stern action against them. As Sri Bhupesh Gupta rightly posed it, even if the Government had reservations about banning communal parties and organisations, what prevents it from taking action to put down blatant communal propaganda?

It is a sad fact that no political party in India can escape blame for the steady growth of communal and divisive forces. They have all been guilty of dereliction of duty. Some of them have no doubt sent their members to heal the wounds after riots have taken place; but, virtually none of them thought it necessary to be vigilant all the time in order to prevent such outbreaks by isolating and exposing the communal elements. There have been no systematic campaigns against police and other officials known to be in collusion with the communal organisations or their leaders. Accusations are made only after the event, with the result that half-hearted action is taken and the officials concerned merely shift their venues of activity. Moreover, parties pledged to upholding secularism and democracy have not hesitated to join forces with communal organisations for supposed electoral gains, in the result strengthening the communalists rather than themselves. Bihar and UP provide outstanding examples. It is true, however that in recent times

at least some of the secular parties have begun to realise their folly and are coming out openly against the RSS and the Jana Sangh.

After the Srinagar conference, the Government has taken a few halting steps to meet the challenge of communalism. But these have not been such as to inspire confidence that the authorities are determined to root out the menace completely. There appears to be a pathetic belief that pious declarations will bring about harmony; neither declarations nor even legislation can bring about the desired results if there is no determined action to implement these. Of such action there is little evidence so far. The Bill introduced in Parliament by the Home Minister to amend the criminal law provisions dealing with communal activity and propaganda cannot produce results even if it is put on the statute book unless simultaneously there is a drive to eliminate from the ranks of the implementing agencies those elements which have close connections with communalists. Unless the Government is bold enough to purge the administration, at least at certain levels, of anti-national elements, all the laws it may enact from time to time for this purpose will remain only scraps of paper.

The real problem is one of creating a sense of security among the minority communities; this can come about only when it is patent that the official machinery is unpolluted and that it will act in cooperation with secular parties and citizens to prevent mischief. In short, the first thing to do is to change the political and administrative climate radically. This can be achieved only by firmly putting down communal propaganda and punishing those engaged in it. Here the administration has the key role and the political parties and the intelligentsia a secondary role.

But so far as long-term action to create secular consciousness among the people as a whole is concerned, the political parties, social workers, educationists and youth have a major role to play. This is true not only in respect of dealing with the forces of

communalism, but also with the elements spreading feelings of separatism on the basis of region, language, caste, etc. The recent wave of attacks against Harijans in several parts of the country, as also the earlier activities of the Shiv Sena and other organisations, have shown that maintenance of national unity does not depend solely on the elimination of the communal virus. In all these cases the State has the immediate responsibility to take steps to guarantee safety of life and property. But peace and harmony can be established on a lasting basis only when the political parties and others—at least those who believe in secular and democratic values—decide not only to have no truck with divisive forces but to fight them every inch of the way.

It is here that Sri Jayaprakash Narayan's plea in the Standing Committee of the NIC that beginning with the coming mid-term polls in four States political parties should select candidates and conduct their campaigns on the basis of policies and programmes and firmly eschew caste and communal considerations, is of great importance. The bane of Indian politics has been that, with the Congress setting the example, virtually all parties

have based selection of candidates and even election campaigns on caste and communal considerations. The tolerance of the Shiv Sena by some political parties in Maharashtra arose from this harmful attitude. The caste appeal to voters is as strong in Bihar as in Madras and Kerala. Unless the political parties take the initiative this will continue to dominate politics in all States.

It is no doubt a good idea to set up integration councils in all the States and observe a National Integration Year; but these steps will achieve little if all political parties do not firmly keep out communal and caste considerations in all their dealings, particularly in the elections. Simultaneously all of them who believe in secularism must join hands in each State as well as on the national plane to expose communal, caste-conscious and other divisive elements in the administration, in places of employment and in educational institutions, for it is only thus that secularism can be translated into reality. The more we tolerate the continuance of such elements in any of these fields, the more difficult will become the task of preventing national disintegration. The language

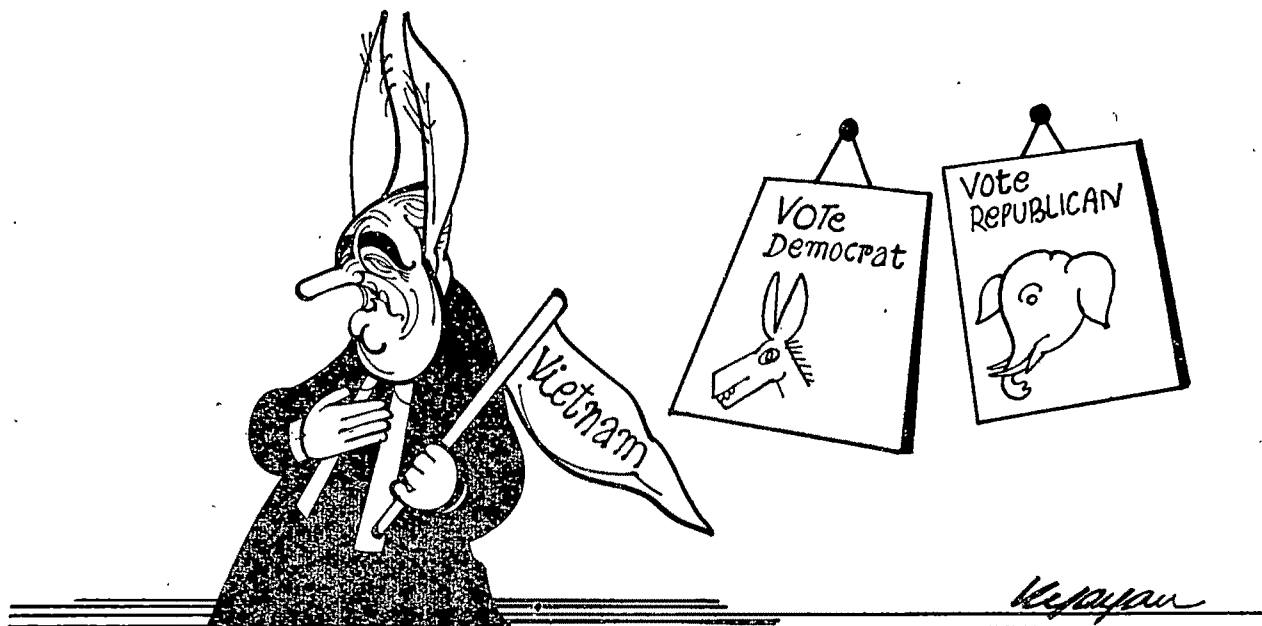
issue must be kept in cold storage till a new atmosphere is created in the country. The problems of Centre-State relations must be thrashed out on the basis of mutual tolerance and willingness to understand.

But most important of all, both the leaders of Government and the political parties must set their faces firmly against communal elements and aggressive caste groups. This calls for readiness to face violent reaction. Even Acharya Bansali, the well-known Gandhian, has advised Harijans not to flee like cowards in the face of attack by so-called caste Hindus but to fight for their rights. This advice holds good for all oppressed communities in the country. It is for the establishment of the rights of all citizens that politicians, administrators, intellectuals and others should unite, without bringing their differences on economic and other matters into the picture.

If the setting up of integration councils will enable us to start a determined war on divisive forces, national unity and integrity can still be preserved despite the dark signs on the horizon.

Oct 29

C. N. Chitta Ranjan



"And, fellow Americans, don't forget your dear old symbol—The Mule."

Men Around Mao

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

IN Communist China they say: 'It's easy to get on a tiger, but harder to get off'. This saying applies aptly to the present position of 74-year old Mao and his staff.

The attempts of Liu Shao-chi, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, Peng Cheng to remove the sick leader with honour met with the resistance of Mao's immediate entourage headed by his 53-year old wife Chien Chin and certain Chinese leaders who support Mao's action in the present period. These leaders formed a bloc with Chien Chin and hope to share the pie of power after the death of the Communist dictator. This is true, above all, of Mao's staff—Lin Piao, Kang Sheng, Chen Po-ta, Chou En-lai, Li Fu-chun and a group of top officers of the Army General Staff.

Lin Piao

Lin Piao, the 60-year old Marshal, is a mysterious personality in Mao's entourage. By manipulating behind the scenes he succeeded in ousting Chu Teh, Peng Teh-huai and Ho Lung from Army leadership and taking the place in the leading hierarchy that formerly belonged to Liu Shao-chi. Marshal Lin Piao's devotion to Mao, which has been so zealously played up in the past ten years, apparently also has ulterior aims.

There are documents in the Taipeh archives showing that Lin Piao had not always been loyal to Mao in the past. He twice spoke up against Mao during the Communist Party's flight from Kiangsi to the Northwest in 1935, then during the Pinsianguar

battle in 1940 and finally in the period of the Korean war.

Knowledgeable China experts in Hongkong and Tokyo believe that the naming of Lin Piao to succeed Mao suits Chou En-lai and the other moderates in Mao's entourage as well as the extremists—Chien Chin and Kang Sheng. They keep in mind that Lin Piao is backed by the Army but he is little known as a politician.

Chou En-lai

Probably no one other than Wang Ming (Chen Shao-yu) has caused Mao as many headaches in the twenties and thirties as Chou En-lai. Chou, together with Tsui-Tsu-po and later with Wang Ming, repeatedly ousted Mao from the Central Committee, the Communist Party's top echelon. True, Chou En-lai later atoned by convincing the Comintern that it was Mao Tse-tung and not Wang Ming who could head the Party's leadership. Since Mao had strengthened himself in the party's leadership and had skillfully managed to discredit his rivals and, above all, Wang Ming and Chan Kuo-t'ao, the Comintern apprehensively and with reservations recognised Mao as the leader of the party. This fact in the history of relations between Mao and Chou dates back many years—but Mao never forgets or forgives. Consequently, when Mao finishes with the Cultural Revolution, Chou will have to settle accounts with him. This bill has increased since Chou is in essence the political double of Liu Shao-chi. The tragedy of Liu Shao-chi and Chou En-lai is that

while they think alike in politics, they could not overcome their mutual personal dislike and past hurts to hit together at Mao. The Communist press now calls Liu Shao-chi the Chinese Khrushchev, but this is no less applicable, if not more to Chou En-lai.

It is a known fact that Mao is a master of intrigues, and unsurpassed in underhand play.

Mao succeeded in making Chou En-lai and Liu Shao-chi come to loggerheads. Liu Shao-chi and his followers significantly crowded out Chou En-lai after 1964. They disliked his spinelessness and his fear of taking decisive steps to limit the big leader's power. Mao took advantage of the political pressure brought on Chou by Liu Shao-chi to get rid of Liu with Chou's support. Chou squared accounts with Liu at the ill-starred 11th plenary meeting of the Central Committee. Well-informed sources in Hongkong and Taipeh reported equal strength at the meeting between the followers of Mao and the followers of Liu.

During the acute clash between Mao and Liu, Chou En-lai and his followers at the meeting (the *Hongkong Star* put the figure at 27) at first took a wait-and-see position. However, when the delegates learnt that Peking had been encircled by military units loyal to Mao and Lin Piao and when Chien Chin (who is not a member of the Central Committee) appeared at the meeting with the Red Guards, Chou En-lai understood that Mao had more chance of success and clearly sided with Mao. This is

how Chou's treachery settled the fate of Liu Shao-chi, his political rival who shared his political views. In return for this service Mao retained the post of Premier for Chou but he removed him from the post of Deputy Chairman of the Party. Mao showed by this step that he was taking Chou in his service but was not forgiving Chou's wavering. He who betrays once, may do it again: it is this that makes Mao distrust Chou.

Kang Sheng

Kang Sheng is one of the men who preserves the secrets of Mao's court. His loyalty to the Chairman is easily explained. Mao is the only support of Kang Sheng who is cynical, exceedingly sly and ambitious. If the Chinese were to give him a name such as the one Mao found for Liu Shao-chi, it would undoubtedly be the Chinese Beria, a name that fits him most.

Kang Sheng was Mao's agent in Moscow. He informed his patron of the plans and activities of Mao's main rival, Wang Ming, and the other Chinese representatives. When Kang returned from Moscow in 1937 he was warmly received by Mao who entrusted him with the most delicate job—heading the Central Committee's Special Department in charge of intelligence and of the leaders' body guards.

Mao gave Kang Sheng the job of purging the Chinese Communist Party of the followers of the pro-Comintern line. In the period that ensued most of the Communist dictator's chief opponents and rivals were liquidated.

It is known that Kang Sheng was extremely hostile to Chou En-lai. This hatred dates back to the thirties. During the "Movement to Rectify the Party's Style of Work" (1941-1944) Kang Sheng was given a free hand by Mao in carrying out the party purge. He physically and morally liquidated many friends and supporters of Chou En-lai. Chou himself was to have been called to account for his speeches against Mao and for his ties with Moscow. At the Seventh Congress of the Party in 1945 Chou En-lai wrote in the Communist press

that Kang Sheng was the party's executioner.

In the course of the Cultural Revolution, Kang Sheng and Chien Chin tried time and again to depose Chou En-lai. The organisation of May 16th and other Red Guard organisations guided by Kang Sheng and under the direct leadership of Chi Pen-yu, Wang Li, Kuang Feng, Mu Hsing and others collected material that would compromise Chou En-lai so as to stage a trial such as the one of the "black band": Liu Shao-chi, Teng Hsiao-P'ing and Peng Cheng.

However Chou's resourcefulness, the support of Lin Piao and the considerable personal authority that Chou still retains among the population led Mao to check his over-zealous lieutenants. Every such skirmish ends in an exchange of figures, that is, the elimination of certain followers of Kang Sheng and Chien Chin as well as of Chou En-lai. In this manner Mao Tse-tung and Lin Piao succeeded in maintaining the unstable equilibrium of groups at Mao's headquarters.

At present, the group of Left extremists headed by Chien Chin and Kang Sheng have launched another offensive on the positions of the moderates whose leader is obviously Chou En-lai. The main objectives of this offensive are—Chou's policy in the economic sphere which the Left extremists regard as reactionary economism and the policy of the professionals which is called a right opportunist trend to reassess the past.

The targets for attacks against Chou are his three closest associates on economic affairs—Li Fu-chun, Nen Yung-chen and Yu Chi-li.

At one time reports were current in Hongkong that these three had been removed, but on July 1 their names were again mentioned among the entourage of Mao Tse-tung and Lin Piao at a meeting with the military.

Does this mean that Chou succeeded in defending them? It is difficult to say. Even if he did, the question arises—for how long? At any rate in July Kang Sheng's activities heightened, while Chou En-lai no longer

gets a place of prominence in Mao's staff. Chou's photograph is no longer published together with Mao Tse-tung and Lin Piao. These facts indicate that the status of Chou En-lai as the No. 3 man in the Mao hierarchy is becoming unstable and that Kang Sheng is pressing for the No. 3 status. He is being helped in this by Chien Chin and apparently by the entire cultural revolution group.

Chen Po-ta

Chen Po-ta is Mao's closest lieutenant on questions of ideology. He is called Mao's "pen". In the past he was Mao's secretary and speech writer. His future depends entirely on Mao.

Japanese and American Sino-logists believe that Chen's dizzy flight up as a result of the Cultural Revolution is less a result of his own merits than of the need to set up a screen for Chien Chin, who is now Chen's first deputy in the Cultural Revolution group.

In spirit Chen Po-ta's speeches are closer to those of Chou En-lai than to those of Kang Sheng and Chien Chin. He always tries to bypass the most salient issues by his scholastic theoretical hair-splitting and by lauding the ideas of Mao Tse-tung.

This year Chen Po-ta has been subjected to several brief attacks in the posters. Obviously they were hung up with the knowledge of Chien Chin and Kang Sheng who warned their associate in this manner that he looks too often in the direction of Chou En-lai. It is fully possible that Chen Po-ta might become the next figure to be exchanged in a new balancing of force. Chen's fall will open the way for the promotion of Chien Chin.

Li Fu-chun

The last man in the list of the leading members of Mao's staff is Li Fu-chun. Li is an old friend and assistant of Chou with whom he studied in France where they joined the Communist Party. Ever since the Communist regime was established in China Li has been working constantly together with Chou and

has been his closest assistant in economic affairs. He has headed the Government's Planning Committee for many years. Li's promotion after the Eleventh plenary meeting of the Communist Party's Central Committee is evidently payment by Mao for support in fighting against Liu Shao-chi.

All experts in the West and in the East believe that Li's

position depends on that of Chou, who has had to protect him time and again since 1966 from the attacks of the Red Guards.

Mao and his staff overestimated their own strength by getting on the tiger named Cultural Revolution. They are poor followers of Wu Sung (hero of a popular novel in China who kills a tiger with his fist). But

Mao and Co. are unable to kill the tiger with their aged fists. Recent events in Communist China reveal that Mao and staff are unable to complete the struggle for power under the guise of the Cultural Revolution because of their insufficient strength, because of the split in Mao's staff and the steadily increasing discontent and resistance of the population.

WHAT SMT GANDHI HAS NOT SEEN—IV

Revolution's Political Base

LAJPAT RAI

THE Latin American revolution is an agrarian and anti-imperialist revolution. The motive forces of its revolution are the workers and peasants, student and revolutionary intellectuals. The national bourgeoisie in Latin America is weak and politically unorganized. It is mainly a compradore bourgeoisie with intimate manifold links with the landed oligarchy. It compromises with imperialism, is afraid of the revolutionary changes and since the Cuban revolution this tendency to compromise with imperialism has been accentuated. Speaking about the National bourgeoisie and its role in the Latin American revolutionary situation, Bernardo Alvarado Monson, the Secretary of the Guatemalan Communist Party declared:

"The Latin American bourgeoisie proved unable, or unwilling to head the struggle for the destruction of the traditional semi-colonial and semi-feudal

structure for democracy and for overcoming backwardness... *We no longer include the national bourgeoisie among the motive forces of the revolution as we had previously done in the traditional scheme of the four classes capable of participating in the revolution in our countries*".

The revolution's principal enemy is the US imperialism which relies on the landlord bourgeois oligarchy and the military Camarilla. It is thus a national liberationist revolution bound to pass into a socialist revolution "since all the three exploiting sectors, US imperialism, landed oligarchy and the native bourgeoisie, stand arrayed against the revolutionary forces of the people headed by workers and peasants". Such was the experience of Cuba where the defeat of Batista led inexorably to building of a socialist society in teeth of opposition from the local vested interests and the American imperialists. In Latin America, said Che Guevara "we either make a socialist revolution, or no revolution, for such are the compulsion of our situation here and so shall they be in other parts of the underdeveloped

world."

The fight of the Latin American peoples against imperialist domination and the oppression of the local oligarchies is gaining momentum. They have to contend with imperialism's aim of maintaining its grip on the continent and with the aim of the oligarchies to perpetuate their privileges.

American imperialism is resorting to undisguised intervention in Latin America. Its system of military pacts and missions, anti-guerrilla training centres and the units of 'green berets', 'black berets' and Rangers is a form of armed aggression against the Latin American people. President Johnson has stated on more than one occasion that he will stop at nothing to prevent any other Latin American country from following Cuba's example. Today, the United States is ready, without a moment's hesitation to nip in the bud any hint at real independence. The United States has established in Latin America a unified system of exploitation and domination through capital investments, control over the Continent's trade, establishment

This is the concluding article of the series, whose previous instalments appeared in Mainstream October 5, 12 and 19, 1968).

of colonies, bases, military missions, embassies, the CIA and the OAS—all together constituting the powerful machinery of domination, determining as a rule the policy of the local ruling classes. *The US imperialism is, therefore, the main, direct external enemy of all the Latin American countries.* For many of them it is the main enemy in general at the present stage of the struggle.

Continental Process

The struggles of the Latin American people have assumed a continental proportion. The Latin American revolution is a continental process much in the same way as the wars of Independence led by Bolivar, O'Higgins and Sucre were a continental struggle for liberation. When the fathers of Latin American liberation fought for the independence of their countries they were striving also for the freedom of other American peoples. No national states and no geographical frontiers were recognized by the liberators of Latin America. It was truly a drama on continental scale. The same spirit pervades the revolutionary struggles of the people today—a continental revolutionary spirit.

On the other hand, US imperialism also functions on a continental level. It is pursuing aggression and intervention throughout the continent which as Fidel Castro pointed out "internationalizes aggressive wars, in which soldiers of different nationalities are engaged, as in the Korean war, and now in South Vietnam—and as in Santo Domingo where soldiers were shipped from Brazil, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua and Paraguay. Furthermore imperialism is trying through the OAS to build an international armed force for use against Cuba and the liberation movements on the continent".

This necessitates joint action by the Latin American peoples and imparts all-continental complexion of outstanding international importance to their struggle.

With the Cuban revolution—a thorough anti-imperialist,

socialist revolution—the situation in Latin America has acquired features which make it qualitatively different from the previous periods of revolutionary upsurge. With this watershed in the history of Latin America a new revolutionary situation has arisen in the continent taken as an economic and political entity. Cuba today is the bastion and the banner of the Latin American revolution, a catalyst for the unfolding revolutionary struggles which will sooner or later engulf the whole continent and destroy all vestiges of imperialist domination from this part of the New World.

Cuba also paradoxically enough makes the revolution in Latin American countries more difficult and at the same time more imperative. The imperialists have learnt as much from the Cuban revolution as the peoples of the Latin American countries struggling against imperialism. Take for example the brazen intervention of the United States in the Dominican Republic. This massive US intervention took place not to suppress a "total revolution" but to stop the return of Juan Bosch, a Dominican liberal, as the President of the Republic, of the restoration of bourgeois constitution trampled under foot by the Trujillo military clique. It was an intervention not to suppress a socialist revolution but "a mere hint at independence". It is very likely that before the Cuban revolution the US imperialists would not have acted with such cynicism, recklessness and brutality—as it did in the Dominican situation. After Cuba imperialism cannot afford to take any chances, and at the same time it is the Cuban revolution which inspires both hope and determination in the hearts of the revolutionaries.

The Second Feature

The second feature of the post-Cuban revolution period in Latin America is the resistance of the ruling oligarchy to any democratic, let alone revolutionary, changes. This resistance goes hand in hand with Washington's aggressive course, its policy of supporting or creating dictator-

ship and even of direct military intervention.

This policy has been projected in what is called the Mann Doctrine aimed at setting up "strong" governments in all countries of the continents. Most of the coups in Latin America since the Cuban revolution had as their aim the overthrow of regimes, which in the opinion of the Pentagon and the local military, were unable, because of their general weakness (or as a result of mass pressure) to suppress the discontent and the growing revolutionary struggles of the people.

The coups which led to the overthrow of the military-civilian Junta in Salvador in 1961, of the government of Arasemena in Ecuador, Ydigoras Fuentes in Guatemala, Villeda Morales in Honduras and Juan Bosch in Dominican Republic in 1963 bear the unmistakable stamp of the fear engendered among the ruling classes by the possibility of new "total revolutions", the "new Cubas". The most glaring recent instance of this phenomenon was the coup against the democratic and the nationalist Goulart government of Brazil. The two latest coups that Smt Gandhi witnessed in Peru and Panama during her short three weeks stay in the continent fall in the same category.

Imperialism's Weapon

Coup d'état in Latin America is thus a weapon used by imperialism and the oligarchy to suppress all the democratic and revolutionary urges of the people, to keep them in lasting bondage and to perpetuate regimes of poverty, illiteracy, hunger and disease in this potentially rich continent.

A Panamanian writer and leader describes the Latin American coups in the following words:

"When the successive governments no longer serve the purposes which the Americans intend, then the American monopolists whip up one of their special inventions. Then the feudal lords of imperialism change their puppets by means of the so-called coup d'état.

The coup d'état is the gross but disguised form in which im-

perialism intervenes in the internal affairs of our countries. And there is not a single nation in our beautiful continent which has not suffered from this monstrous weapon. The history of Latin America is, in a certain sense, the history of coup d'états, made-in-USA."

Thus behind these military coups is reaction's firm determination to close before the democratic and progressive forces all peaceful ways to participate in the administration of the country, to prevent the constitutional realization of reforms which would limit the economic power of the agrarian oligarchy and the privileges of the US monopolies. In most countries of Latin America, the ruling classes, hand-in-glove with US imperialists, and fearing the impending revolution—their death knell, have closed all the peaceful paths of development of the revolutionary process. The only way left for the people is the way of the armed struggle.

The armed struggle, as the sole motive force of the Latin American revolution and the greatest lesson of the Cuban revolution for the people of Latin America, is not a question of theoretical discussion as is being made out by some people. It has emerged out of the realities of life as they exist in the Latin American continent. The slogan of "revolutionary violence" to counteract the "imperialist violence" is a slogan born of the very logic of the situation into which a decadent oligarchy supported by a moribund imperialism has thrown a whole continent.

Today armed guerilla struggle is the order of the day in Latin America. Already, the guerilla bands have appeared in Guatemala, Venezuela, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia and Brazil. More and more revolutionaries are veering round to this only form of struggle left to them. Some have traversed a tortuous road to reach this truth, while others are still debating and discussing the issue. The experience of the Guatemalan Communist Party is a typical one, which is revealing as well as instructive for the

course of the future development of the revolutionary process. The third Congress of the Guatemalan Communist Party held in September 1960 adopted a resolution which considered armed struggle as *the decisive form of struggle* in the Guatemalan revolutionary process. It, however, also considered the role of "peaceful and legal forms of struggle as necessary, even imperative in the existing situation". A slogan of 'diverse forms' of struggle was adopted with armed struggle as the decisive factor. Two years later the Guatemalan Communists were making the following self-criticism in their extended Central Committee meeting:

"The slogan of diverse forms of struggle was wrong. It confused many sections of the people as well as our comrades. The conditions do not exist in this country for peaceful action of any kind to remove the reactionaries from power and consequently for the peaceful development of the revolution.....It is this analysis that enables us to say that at the present stage the agrarian and anti-imperialist revolution in Guatemala can take *no other way except that of armed struggle*". (Documentos III, Partido Comunista Guatemalteco).

Controversial Questions

The above is a typical experience, an experience shared by more and more sections of the Left movement, including the Communist Parties in Latin America. There are, however, serious differences on the questions of tactics, such as the way the guerilla units have to be organized, the question as to who will lead them, their relationship with the parties, the role of the city working class, and a host of other such questions. These are controversial questions which do not fall within the scope of the present series of articles. Unfortunately, no common understanding has been reached on these issues so far in the revolutionary movement of Latin America. Some of them divide the movement sharply and incite strong sentiments, not conducive for the unity of the movement

against imperialism. Yet it is hoped that the experience of life and the realities of the situation will compel all the anti-imperialist forces on the Continent to unite on the basis of a common programme and around a common strategy, following correct revolutionary tactics.

The Latin American revolution is a part of the national liberation struggles of the peoples of the Third World. This fact has been emphasized again and again by the leaders of the Latin American revolutionary movement.

Castro in his speech on July 26, 1967, talked about the unity of the liberation movements of the peoples all over the world. He said:

"American imperialism is the common enemy of the awakening peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Our struggles have one common aim—namely, the destruction of this enemy. In today's world the destruction of imperialism, of American imperialism, is an absolute pre-condition for the advance of the underdeveloped and poor nations towards the goals of development and prosperity."

It is this sentiment which unites the peoples of the Third World, the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America into a common endeavour. It is this sentiment which unites the people of India and those of Latin America and evokes mutual interest in one another's problems, struggles, even history, culture and civilization. The Indian people will, therefore, not be happy to see their Prime Minister shaking the hands of Latin American dictators, accepting their hospitality and even inviting some of them to visit our country. They were pained to know that she chose not to visit heroic Cuba, the fount of Latin American revolution, the inspiration for millions of Latin Americans, as well as for Asians and Africans. They wished her to shake hands with Fidel Castro as her father did in the United Nations, calling him a "brave young man". They wished her to invite the leaders of the Cuban revolution to this country, the leaders of a

young nation which has demonstrated to the whole world how imperialism can be fought, and how a nation's dignity, honour and resources can be reclaimed from it. They were pained to know that another heroic son of Latin America and a great friend of India, Cheddi Jagan was excluded from her receptions in Guyana without a word of displeasure and protest from her. Smt Gandhi went on a "friendship trip", on a "voyage of discovery" to the Latin American continent. The people of India may well ask "whose friendship" was she seeking in their name—of the Latin American dictators, oligarchs, and Presidents of American Companies, or those of the people of Latin America whom the above Trinity oppresses and keeps in bondage? And what did she "discover" in Latin America?—the glittering cities, the bemadalled generals, Las Casas grandes, the beauty of the beaches, the fazendas of Brazil and the towering Andes! Did she have a glimpse of the slums of Santiago, Buenos Aires, or Rio de Janeiro, did she meet the mute, illiterate and hungry Indians in Colombia, did she see the youthful guerilla warriors of Venezuela fighting against imperialist oppression, did she visit the Brazilian North East where millions live in sub-human conditions, where parents sell their children into slavery, for otherwise they may die of hunger, where infant mortality surpassed that of ours?

The Indian people have yet to discover Latin America—the real Latin America—and they will do it with their own efforts. And as for friendship they cannot be friends with the enemies of the Latin American people—the landed oligarchs, the military dictators, the American imperialists. They will build their own bridges of friendship across the oceans—bridges not leading to palaces of oligarchs and dictators, but to the favallas, the barrios, the shanty towns, they will build their own bridges to the hearts of the Latin American people—the *flagados* (oppressed ones) and *descamisados* (the shirtless one) who are coming to their own. (Concluded)

BEHIND PERUVIAN MILITARY TAKE-OVER

WE must confess we find some cause for cheer in the Peruvian coup d'etat. The military have always been US pets in Peru as elsewhere in Latin America; in this latest coup dog bit man—the military turned against US. And in a way the State Department finds especially painful but which will give satisfaction elsewhere in Latin America—by cancelling a Standard Oil concession. The protection of this concession has long been a major aim of US policy in Peru, and Secretary Rusk expressed "concern" over it at an impromptu press conference on Oct. 9.

This concession has been a focus of protest for a century or more. It was originally obtained by British interests in 1826. They obtained subsoil exploration rights for 10 *pertenencias* (about 100 acres all told) for a nominal sum. An engineering survey in 1914 disclosed that they had actually been utilizing not 10 but 41,614 *pertenencias* (or about 416,140 acres). The ensuing scandal has haunted Peruvian politics ever since. It did not die down when International Petroleum Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Standard Oil of New Jersey, took over these huge British holdings in 1926. They produce 80 percent of Peru's crude oil and 90 percent of its natural gas.

The State Department may have precipitated the take-over it now deplures. Frederick B. Pike in his recently published *The Modern History of Peru* (Praeger) says the reformist President Belaunde whom the military have just overthrown was hampered by the effort "of the State Department to wring from him guarantees to maintain the favoured treatment which the Peruvian government has accorded the International Petroleum Company."

IPC was paying only 50 percent of its profits to Peru while other oil countries were getting as much as 70 percent. Belaunde was under pressure to get better terms or nationalize. Mr Pike goes on to say sardonically—

"Apparently feeling that continuation of the conspicuous privileges of US oil interests takes precedence over matters of internal Peruvian reforms and renovation projects, the pristine spirit of the Alliance for Progress notwithstanding, the Lyndon Johnson Administration declined to cooperate with the Belaunde administration unless it would give the desired assurances of following an indulgent policy toward the IPC. This Belaunde refused to do and, as a result, by late 1965 was still not receiving the share of Alliance for Progress funds that his Government had earned the right to expect."

Since Mr Pike wrote, Belaunde gave in and negotiated a new contract satisfactory to Standard Oil. Peru recovered title to the oil lands but at the expense of giving IPC refining and marketing rights, and dropping all claims for back taxes. The result split Belaunde's party. The coup followed. But the military—who received \$5 million in aid from Washington last fiscal year alone—abrogated the contract and nationalized the oil properties. How sad when we cannot even trust the Latin military any more.

—From I. F. Stone's Weekly, October 21, 1968

The Thought of Gramsci

SUSOBHAN SARKAR

1

Life

THE name of Antonio Gramsci as a foremost Marxist leader reached our country barely a decade back. Even in his own Italy, his reputation was established only after the fall of Fascism, with the publication of his mature writings and other material on him; today an Istituto Gramsci at Rome is engaged in a study of his thought. The post-war Italian Communist Party has been largely guided by his ideas; and his importance is being increasingly appreciated elsewhere as well, in the 'renaissance' of Marxism set in motion by the Twentieth Congress. Two English books help us in understanding him; Dr Louis Marks' translation, 1957, of the *Modern Prince and Other Writings* (Lawrence and Wishart) and Professor John Cammett's *Antonio Gramsci*, 1967, (Stanford University Press).

Antonio Gramsci was born on January 22, 1891 in a poor family in backward Sardinia. At four, an accident turned him into a hunch-backed half-cripple. His school education was interrupted for a time because of parental poverty, and at eleven he was working 10 hours a day in his father's office to eke out the family income. Yet he had developed a passion for reading and won a scholarship to enter Turin University in 1911, where Togliatti was his fellow-student and intimate friend. At Turin, young Antonio imbibed Crocean idealism from Professor Cosmo and shone in linguistic studies under Professor Bartoli who was grieved beyond measure when his brightest pupil deserted a most promising academic career without waiting for a degree, for the sake of political work. Academic training however had become a part of his life; later on he could act as the dramatic critic to the *Avanti*, was one of the first appraisers of Pirandello, and produced in prison almost a commentary on the tenth canto of Dante's *Inferno*.

By 1913, Gramsci was deep in the activity of the Socialist Youth Federation, proving to be an effective teacher of the workers. In 1914 he joined the Turin section of the Socialist Party, rising gradually to the section's directorate. After the 1917 August insurrection at Turin he was the editor of the Party paper *Il Grido del Popolo*.

His first major work was *La Citta Futura* of February 1917. He dwelt in it on the power of the

will, guided by an analysis of reality, disciplined by the party, to effect fundamental changes.

On May 1, 1919, Gramsci and his friends founded in Turin a weekly communist cultural review, *L'Ordine Nuovo*, which tried to combine the proletarian cultural renewal with a real political movement. It carried over 200 articles by Gramsci in two years. In the factory 'internal commissions' or workshop committees, Gramsci saw the Italian prototype of the Soviets, the democratic organs of workers' self-government. *L'Ordine Nuovo* therefore campaigned for the organization, transformation, and extension of the internal factory committees, with considerable success in the Turin region.

The failure of the Factory Councils movement, followed by that of the 'occupation' of the factories in 1920, was attributed by Gramsci to the apathy of the Socialist leadership. He was now convinced of the prior necessity for a renewal of the Party on the lines of the 21 conditions laid down by the Third International to which Italian Socialists had formally adhered. In October 1920, he signed the draft communist manifesto of Milan confirmed by the Imola 'congress' next month. *L'Ordine Nuovo* under him turned into a daily from January 1, 1921 to propagate the new ideas. He was a delegate to the Livorno Party Congress in January 1920, but always diffident in public speaking, he left to Terracini the exposition of *L'Ordine Nuovo's* views. At Livorno the Party was split, as the leader, Serrati, refused to exclude the reformists.

The Italian Communist Party, founded on January 21, 1921, elected Gramsci to its first Central Committee. In May 1922, he was sent to Moscow as the Party representative at the Comintern Executive. He suffered from a 6 months breakdown, but in Russia he met Giulia and enjoyed the only spell of purely personal happiness in his life. Giulia bore him two children.

He had to return to Italy in 1924, to take up under Fascist oppression the Party Secretaryship from the extremist sectarian hands of Bordiga. *L'Unita* (after periods of suppression, the official Party organ even now) was founded by Gramsci on February 12, 1924. It preached the united front of the period, all the more necessary in the West where social democracy was a reality. The Party under Fascist repression had now to exist in a semi-clandestine fashion: but the aim was laid down to build up a mass party. In 1926, in an essay on the

Southern Question, Gramsci worked out the implications suggested by *L'Ordine Nuovo* in 1920 and focussed attention on the necessity of understanding the South to forge a proletarian-peasant alliance. The original ideas of Gramsci were enshrined in the Lyons Theses (especially Nos 3 to 18) in 1926. Here we have a distinction between South and North Italy, a gulf between the 'countryside' and the 'city', somewhat reminiscent of Mao and Lin Pi-ao, with the vital difference however that, according to Gramsci, the revolutionary impulse comes from the 'city'.

On November 8, 1926, Gramsci was arrested by Mussolini's police. At the trial in May 1928, the prosecutor demanded: "for 20 years we must stop that brain from working." In the fortnight's journey after the sentence to the Turi di Bari prison, Gramsci was chained to a cattle-truck so that he could neither lie down nor stand up. In the first prison years, he was wakened "for inspection" three times every night. Yet he could write to his sister-in-law: 'If you beat your head against the wall, it is your head which breaks and not the wall.' Tenaciously he struggled to obtain from the highest authorities the minimum legal facilities for reading and writing in prison.

The result was the *Quaderni del Carcere* or Prison Notes, 2848 closely-packed pages in 32 note-books. Difficult to understand because of necessary circumlocutions (Marxism becomes the 'philosophy of praxis', Lenin 'Illici', classes 'social groups' etc.), the disjointed thoughts, and the terseness of language, the notes (published between 1948 and 1951) are of perennial interest. Dr Marks, in his translation of parts of this, has aptly commented: "Each re-reading will be found to reveal fresh subtleties of thought—which at first may be missed."

At last in January 1936, Gramsci was transferred to clinics for overdue treatment, but immediately after the remission of sentence on account of shattered health, he passed away on April 27, 1937, before he could see his wife and children again.

Gramsci had a rare independence of mind, rare indeed at the height of the Soviet spell. On October 14, 1926, he had the courage to write to the CPSU leadership, immersed then in internecine strife: 'Today you are destroying your work. You are degrading, and running the risk of nullifying,—Lenin's work.' He was critical of the ultra-revolutionary line of the Sixth Comintern Congress. He felt that it was mechanical to expect revolution as a direct result of the world slump; 'objective conditions for the proletarian revolution have existed in Europe for more than fifty years', after all;—what was needed was to 'be more political'. He recognised that Fascism had a broad social base distinct from the old ruling classes, which however would crack in time with its own contradictions. In his talks with his prison comrades at Turi, he held that class alliances were absolutely necessary in Italy and advanced the unpopular slogan of a Constituent Assembly to rally all people disaffected with Fascist rule. All this ante-dated the change of line at the Seventh Congress.

Concept of Hegemony

CENTRAL to all Gramsci's thinking is the concept of hegemony. Hegemony of course was one of Lenin's great ideas, but Gramsci's presentation is perhaps a wider and deeper analysis.

Gramsci distinguished two different areas in the superstructure: 'political society' made up of public institutions and organs of coercion (army, police, judiciary, administrative bureaucracy); and 'civil society', the totality of private institutions (churches, schools, unions, political parties). Hegemony is the predominance, obtained by consent rather than force, consent secured through the agency of private institutions in the realm of civil society, of one class over other classes. Gramsci's 'Egemonia' or Hegemony is described in the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 1960, by G.A. Williams as "an order in which a certain way of life and thought is dominant, in which one concept of reality is diffused throughout society—informing with its spirit all taste, morality, customs, religious and political principles, and all social relations".

Gramsci himself puts forward his concept with great clarity:

'we can fix two great "floors" of the superstructure: that which can be called "civil society", i.e. all the organisations which are commonly called "private", and that of "political society" or the State,—which correspond (respectively) to the function of "hegemony" which the ruling class exercises over the whole of society, and to that of "direct rule" or of command that is expressed in the State and in "juridical" government. Intellectuals are the "officers" of the ruling class for the exercise of the subordinate functions of social hegemony and political government, i.e. (1) of the "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the direction imprinted on social life by the fundamental ruling class, a consent which comes into existence "historically" from the "prestige" (and hence from the trust) accruing to the ruling class from its position and its function in the world of production; and (2) of the apparatus of State coercion, which "legally" ensures the discipline of those groups which do not "consent" either actively or passively, but is constituted for the whole of society in anticipation of moments of crisis in command and direction when spontaneous consent diminishes.'

The difference between the two societies is certainly basic, but Gramsci did not bring out the possible inter-penetration between their respective functions. Thus, State-power itself may undertake a certain amount of persuasion (official propaganda of explanation, appeals to patriotism and loyalty etc.) to supplement its coercive authority. On the other hand, private institutions (like churches and parties) may indulge in some coercion on its adherents.

It remains to be added that a rising class, even before advent to State-power, can and does aspire after hegemony over other classes, to assert its capacity to become the ruling class, to demonstrate its own *weltanschauung* in political, cultural, or ethi-

cal fields. Similarly, a class pushed out from State-power may struggle for, and even succeed for a time in, retaining hegemony over others through its continuing hold over the institutions of civil society.

In the Socialist State, direct political rule takes the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, rooted essentially in coercive authority. It must never be forgotten, however, that this has to be supplemented by 'social hegemony' of the ruling proletarian class, the winning of willing consent of the masses. Without this equilibrium, to establish which requires tact and skill and real ability, the stability of the workers' State itself will be in jeopardy. Was this the principle that was ignored in East Europe under Stalinist auspices?

The problem of hegemony becomes particularly important after a period of revolutionary upsurge, according to Gramsci. This was the case for example in Europe after 1815 and 1921. Where a new ruling class had attained power, it had to strive after stability through hegemony rather than direct coercion. Even elsewhere, the class struggle in such circumstances passes from a 'war of manoeuvre' to a 'war of position', mainly on the cultural front.

Gramsci firmly believed that, for the aspiring proletariat, the struggle for social hegemony was all the more important in the West. There, however unstable the State-power might appear to be, behind it stood 'a robust structure of civil society' (as in our tradition-bound country, perhaps), unlike Russia, where 'civil society was primordial and gelatinous'. In the West, a 'war of position' was indeed inevitable, for Gramsci held that the conquest of power was unlikely here without a prior hegemonic victory of the workers in the domain of civil society.

3

L'Ordine Nuovo

GRAMSCI'S *L'Ordine Nuovo* was a most remarkable journal in the annals of Marxism. Quite possibly, the famous *Rinascita* of Togliatti is a conscious revival of the earlier endeavour.

The first objective of *L'Ordine Nuovo* was to prepare the working class for social hegemony by developing its own capacity for culture. Gramsci wrote much later:

'From the moment when a subordinate class becomes really independent and dominant, calling into being a new type of State, the need arises concretely of building a new intellectual and moral order, i.e. a new type of society, and hence the need to elaborate the most universal concepts, the most refined and decisive ideological weapons.'

The need begins however even before the accession to power. Gramsci pointed out: 'Every revolution has been preceded by hard critical thinking.' The working class therefore must create its own Enlightenment, based on the knowledge of 'the others'. Mere technical education benefits mostly the industrialists. What must be cultivated is a wider world outlook.

Gramsci's editorial in *L'Ordine Nuovo* on July 12, 1919 reads:

'It is essential to convince the workers and peasants that it is above all in their own interest to submit to the permanent discipline of education, and to create a conception of their own of the world.'

In the editorial on August 23, 1919, on the approach of the fourth centenary of Leonardo da Vinci, Gramsci wrote:

'A Communist cultural review—should encourage the complete development of one's mental capacities for a higher and fuller life—Why cannot we ourselves, with our modest forces, begin the work of the education system of the future among the youth—Are there not already workers whom the class struggle has given a new sense of dignity and liberty who—when they hear of the poets' songs and the names of artists and thinkers—ask bitterly: "Why have not we, too, been taught these things?"—In the documentation of ideas transmitted to us by a millenium of work and thought there are elements which have eternal value, which cannot and must not perish.—This must begin to be done, wherever the proletariat is approaching the maturity necessary for social change.'

As Lenin put it in his *What Is to Be Done*, the workers may very well tell the intellectuals: "talk to us less of what we already know, and tell us more about what we do not know and what we can never learn from our factory and 'economic' experience."

In December 1919 was started a School of Culture and Propaganda for the workers. But obviously, workers' education cannot be divorced from their material life. Gramsci reflected later in prison:

'*L'Ordine Nuovo* worked, week by week, to develop certain forms of new intellectualism—The mode of existence of the new intellectual—must consist of being actively involved in practical life as a builder, an organiser, "permanently persuasive" because he is not purely an orator—'.

The programme of the paper in August 1920 recalled the fact that 'the problem of the development of the Factory Committees became the central problem, it became the *idea* of *L'Ordine Nuovo*.' Thus cultural education was being linked up with actual political movement. Gramsci continued:

'In the Factory Councils the worker, because of his very nature, plays the role of producer as a result of his position and function in society, in the same way as the citizen plays his role in the democratic parliamentary state.'

The programme of the Factory Councils, in the issue on November 8, 1919, declared for the election by all workers in a factory of commissars from whom was to be chosen the new executive committee. The tasks laid down were threefold: defence of labour rights, workers' education, and preparation for the eventual seizure of the factories. Useful technical innovations were to be accepted, even if proposed by the management involving some hardship, to cultivate the sense of being a producer and not a mere wage-earner. 'The factory council is the model of the

proletarian state. Gramsci added that 'the formation of a system of councils represents the first concrete assertion of the communist revolution in Italy.'

The Factory Council was conceived as being quite distinct from trade unions which under capitalism are primarily, often enough exclusively, organs merely bargaining for the sale of labour power. The Councils were organised as units of production, inculcating the consciousness of the possibility of a take-over in industry, and the sense of consequent responsibility. The Councils were elected representatives of the entire workers, not voluntary associations like the Party. It would be a challenge to the Party to try to win a friendly majority in the councils, as indeed was the practice in the early Soviets. To impose the Party by command on the councils is wrong—this was the German mistake in 1919. The working class must be the embodiment of the true revolution—the Party is only the agent.

L'Ordine Nuovo was aware also of the necessity of winning the peasants over to alliance with the workers. Gramsci's editorial of January 3, 1920 drew attention to the Mezzogiorno problem, the Southern Question, which he later elaborated in the famous essay of 1926.

'It is necessary, in order to win the trust and consent of the peasants and of the semi-proletarian categories in the cities, to overcome prejudices and conquer certain egoistic traits which can exist and do exist in the working class—a class which can conquer and build socialism only if aided and followed by these social strata.'

The Turin communists supported the division of the land, but only 'as subordinate to united class action.' They warned against 'any illusions of miraculous results from the mechanical partition of the estates'. After all, 'what does the poor peasant gain by invading uncultivated or badly cultivated lands? Without machines, without a dwelling—without credit, without cooperative institutions—?'

L'Ordine Nuovo affirmed in this editorial:

'The economic regeneration of the peasants must not be sought in dividing up the uncultivated and badly cultivated lands, but in solidarity with the industrial proletariat, which in its turn needs the solidarity of the peasants—In imposing workers' control over industry, the proletariat will direct industry towards the production of agricultural machinery for the peasants, of textile and shoes for the peasants, and of electrical energy for the peasants; it will prevent industry and the banks carrying out any further exploitation of the peasants—the workers will break all the chains which bind the peasant to poverty and despair—the proletariat will direct the enormous power of state organization towards helping the peasants in their struggle against the landowners, against nature and poverty; it will give credit to the peasants, institute cooperatives, guarantee personal security and property against plunderers, and carry out public expenditure for development and irrigation.'

Allied to the peasant question in Italy is the hold of the Catholic Church over the masses in the countryside. Gramsci welcomed the rise of the Catholic

Popular Party of Sturzo (1919). It marked the end of the long political abstention, since the unification, of the Italian Catholics and implied that the Church was turning from other-worldliness to the mundane material needs of the masses and building up 'associationism' among the peasants untouched by the factory model of organisation. The competition of the Popular Party with Socialism was to Gramsci no cause for alarm. After all, the Socialists heading for a possible political 'civil war' need not saddle themselves with a 'religious war' as well; the workers' State would in any case be obliged to seek an equilibrium with the Catholic masses representing a true popular political force. In this Gramscian analysis perhaps lies the germ of the 'dialogue' which the Italian Communist Party is trying to carry on with the immense Catholic population.

4

Role of the Intellectuals

THE position of the intellectuals is normally neglected in Marxian literature. Very many passages in the *Quaderni del Carcere* indicate however Gramsci's deep concern with the problem.

His analysis starts with the comment—'All men are intellectuals, one could therefore say; but all men do not have the function of intellectuals in society. Thus, since anyone at any time can fry a couple of eggs or mend a hole in a jacket, we do not say that everyone is a cook or a tailor.'

Intellectuals are divided into two broad categories—'organic' and 'traditional'.

(1) Every social class, coming into existence on the original basis of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates with itself, organically, one or more groups of intellectuals who give it homogeneity and consciousness—the capitalist entrepreneur creates with himself the industrial technician, the political economist, the organiser of a new culture, of a new law, etc.—Feudal lords as well possessed a particular technical ability: military ability;—the mass of the peasants—do not elaborate their own 'organic' intellectuals—although other social groups take many of their intellectuals from the peasant masses—

(2) But every "essential" social class emerging into history from the preceding economic structure—had found—intellectual categories which were pre-existing and which, moreover, appeared as representatives of an historical continuity—. The most typical of these intellectual categories is that of the ecclesiastics, monopolisers for a long time—of certain important services—the intellectual category organically tied to the landed aristocracy—. Just as these various categories of traditional intellectuals have a sense of their own uninterrupted historical continuity—so they see themselves as autonomous and independent of the ruling social group—the whole idealist philosophy can easily be connected with this assumed position of the social complex of intellectuals, and may be defined as the expression of this social utopia through

which intellectuals believe themselves to be "independent", autonomous, clothed in their own characters, etc. . . .

'One of the most important characteristics of every class which develops towards power is its struggle to assimilate and conquer "ideologically" the traditional intellectuals. Assimilations and conquests are the more rapid and effective the more the given social class puts forward simultaneously its own organic intellectuals. The intellectuals develop slowly, much more slowly than any other social group, because of their own nature and historical role. They represent the whole cultural tradition of a people, and they wish to recapitulate and synthesise the whole of (its) history—To think it possible that this type can, as a mass, break with the whole of the past in order to place itself wholeheartedly on the side of a new ideology, is absurd.—But it is also important and useful that a break of an organic kind—is caused inside the mass of the intellectuals: that there is formed—a left-wing tendency—'

Gramsci added that there is a 'horizontal' distinction between the traditional and organic intellectuals. Another distinction is 'vertical' between 'specialists' engaged in organising a particular sectional activity, and the 'directors' with more 'political' vision—who will organise society in general to 'create the most favourable conditions for the expansion of the class' whole interests they serve.'

Again, '—the very function of organising social hegemony and State rule gives rise to a certain division of labour and so to a certain gradation of qualifications—in the highest grade will have to be placed the creators of various sciences, of philosophy, art, etc.; in the lowest, the most humble "administrators" and propagators of already existing traditional and accumulated riches.'

The industrial proletariat has mostly relied on merely 'assimilated' traditional intellectuals. Gramsci's *L'Ordine Nuovo* aimed at developing intellectuals originating in the proletariat. A proletarian intellectual starts with technical education; but 'from technical work he arrives at technical science and historical humanistic views, without which he would remain a 'specialist' merely and could not become a 'director'.

Organic intellectuals representing the dominant class provide personnel for the coercive organs of political society or the State. Traditional intellectuals mainly endeavour to win the consent of the people in the area of civil society.

'The problem of the functionaries partly coincides with the problem of the intellectuals. But, if it is true that every new form of society and State has had need of a new type of functionary, it is also true that new ruling social groups have never been able to put aside, at least for a certain time, the formation of functionaries already existing.'

Gramsci suggested, as a line of solution of this problem in the modern context, 'unity of manual and intellectual work and a closer link between the legislative and the executive power'—thinking evidently of the Paris Commune—early Soviet model.

It is wrong to minimise the importance of really competent intellectuals. Gramsci observed :

'Bukharin only wants to attack the weakest people and on their weakest points—in order to win easy verbal victories.—In the political and military struggle it may be good tactics to break through at the points of least resistance—. On the ideological front, however, defeat of the auxiliaries and the minor followers has an almost negligible importance; on this front it is necessary to defeat the eminent people—'.

Gramsci also had a word of wisdom regarding the correct policy towards the intellectuals, worth following in spite of the attendant risk and difficulty in implementation. Only greater risks result and have resulted from a neglect of such advice :

'It seems necessary that the hard work for the research for new truths and for the better, more coherent and clear formulation of the truths themselves should be left to the free initiative of individual scholars, even if they continually replace in discussion the very principles which appear most essential. Besides, it will not be difficult to make clear when such discussions have interested motives and are not of a scientific character.'

5

The Historical Process

GRAMSCI had an abiding interest in History. In his last letter to his elder son, he wrote :

'I think you like history, just as I did when I was your age, because it is about living men. And everything that is about men, as many men as possible, all the men in the world united among themselves in societies, working and struggling and bettering themselves must please you more than any other thing.'

Gramsci sharply distinguished historical economism of Professor Loria for instance, from Marx's historical materialism. 'It often happens,' he pointed out, 'that people attack historical economism believing they are attacking historical materialism.' He explained:

'—historical economism—does not distinguish what is "relatively permanent" from what is an occasional fluctuation, and by an economic fact it means the personal self-interest of a small group, in a direct and "dirty Jewish sense"—economic development is reduced to a succession of technical changes in the instruments of labour—. In its most widespread form of economist superstition, Marxism loses a great part of its cultural expansiveness in the higher spheres of the intellectual group, in return for what it gains among the popular masses and the mediocre intellectuals—. As Engels wrote, it is very convenient for many people to believe they have—all political and philosophical wisdom concentrated in a few formulae—.

'—The result is—the loss of all voluntary initiative aiming to predispose this situation according to a plan—at certain moments the automatic drive due to the economic factor is slowed down,

cramped or even broken up momentarily by traditional ideological elements. There must, therefore, be a consciously planned struggle—An appropriate political initiative is always necessary to free the economic drive from the tethers of traditional policies—'

Gramsci maintained that the historical process is not automatic and mechanical, but the result of the struggle of forces some of which are conscious elements. To quote again:

'It is the problem of the relation between structure and super-structures which needs to be posed exactly and resolved in order to reach a correct analysis of the forces working in the history of a certain period and determine their relationship—in studying a structure, it is necessary to distinguish organic movements (relatively permanent) from movements which could be called "incidental" (which appear as occasional, immediate, almost accidental)—. A crisis appears which sometimes lasts for decades. This exceptional duration means that incurable contradictions have appeared—in the structure, and that the political forces working positively for the preservation and defence of the same structure are exerting themselves nevertheless to heal them within certain limits—.'

The conclusion is drawn: 'every shortcoming in historical duty, increases the necessary disorder and prepares more serious catastrophes.

Wrong understanding of the historical process leads naturally to over-simplified wrong conclusions. Thus, Gramsci continued in his *Modern Prince*:

'The error committed in historico-political analysis consists in having been unable to find the relationship between what is organic and what is occasional—one's own inferior and immediate desires and passions are the cause of error, in so far as they are substituted for objective and impartial analysis, and this happens not as a conscious "means" to stimulate action but as self-deceit.—'

It is this flexible approach which enabled Gramsci, unlike most of his comrades, to anticipate in the manifesto of *L'Ordine Nuovo* in May 1919 the possibility of a Fascist triumph in Italy in the midst of an apparent tide towards revolution—when he talked of either a proletarian conquest of power or 'a tremendous reaction by the propertied classes.'

Gramsci's concrete references to the past historical process are often enough quite penetrating.

The Renaissance, he felt, remained aristocratic and could not activate the masses; the Reformation achieved popular participation, but at a cost of intellectual sterility for a long period, failing to win over the intellectuals; the French Revolution did fire the people, but even 'it had no immediate flowering on a high cultural level.'

In France by 1871, 'not only did the new class struggling for power conquer the representatives of the old society—but it also conquered the newest groups which held that the new structure—was already out-dated and thus showed that it was alive in comparison with the old and the very new.' Such a comment on the Paris Commune did require courage

in a communist, though passages from Marx himself can be cited in its support. Again, 'with 1870-71 all the principles of political strategy and tactics born in practice in 1789 and developed ideologically around 1848 lost their efficacy (those which are summed up in the formula of the "permanent revolution"—). Engels' testimony would confirm this.

Also: 'It is precisely the study of these "waves" of varying frequency which allows us to reconstruct the relations between structure and super-structure, on the one hand, and, on the other, between the development of organic movement and incidental movement within the structure.— It can be excluded that, by themselves, economic crises directly produce fundamental events; they can only create a more favourable ground for the propagation of certain ways of thinking—. The decisive element in every situation is the force, permanently organised and pre-ordered over a long period, which can be advanced when one judges the situation is favourable—therefore the essential task is that of paying systematic and patient attention to forming and developing this force—'

Quite appropriately, Gramsci devoted much thinking to Italian history, especially the history of the intellectuals. He thought that the 'non-nazionale-popolare' character of the Italian intellectuals was rooted in history.

Classical Rome formed its intellectuals from Greeks and oriental freedmen reinforced by non-Romans lured by citizenship. The Church continued this cosmopolitan detachment by drawing in men from all over Europe into its hierarchy. The Church, as a universal yet secular power, developed a natural opposition to Italian nationalism. Latin and even the literary Italian had little connection with the masses and kept the intellectuals aloof from the people. The medieval city-states had their 'organic' intellectuals but could not 'assimilate' the 'traditional' intellectuals, and in their particularism gravitated to the Papal or Imperial camps. The Renaissance was 'regressive' from the national-popular point of view, destroying the city-particularism without putting forth national unity, diverting able men to the pursuit of activity unrelated to national problems, even to the search after personal successes. The 'Italianisation' of the Church, aimed at preserving its universal position, strengthened 'supra-nationalism'. Thus the entire Italian intellectual tradition was a barrier to political liberation.

Machiavelli was the outstanding exception. He alone showed a 'precocious Jacobinism'. His idea of a national militia was a step in this direction and his *Prince* was a manifesto of national unification.

The Jacobin theory is a political approach to society with the aim of radicalisation. The Jacobins, 'a new elite', wanted, for the bourgeoisie of course, 'the hegemonic leadership of all the popular forces.' They opposed compromises that might isolate the bourgeoisie from its popular base. Machiavelli's *Prince* was an anticipation of this Jacobinism.

Gramsci's analysis of the Risorgimento is equally suggestive. In this movement, the leadership was at stake between the 'Moderates' (Cavour-D'Azeglio)

and the 'Actionists' (Mazzini-Garibaldi). The former capitalistic intellectuals truly 'organic' to bourgeois-aristocratic classes established their hegemony by a 'gradual but continual absorption'. The latter, with no close connection with the heterogeneous groups they wanted to represent, failed to advance a Jacobin social programme.

Recently, Gramsci's views on the Risorgimento have been attacked by the historian Romeo, but the criticism can be effectively answered. The Agrarian Question is not, as Romeo thought, a 20th century innovation; ample evidence exists for its presence during and even before the Risorgimento.—The failure to advance a Jacobin programme in the 19th century did lead to a compromise between the new bourgeoisie and the old landed aristocracy.—Southern backwardness, due to the rejection of a peasant programme, was not even a necessary condition, as Romeo thought, of capitalist accumulation for a time for the good of all Italy; it has persisted ever since, instead of being temporary, and the gap between North and South has even widened.—Gramsci did not deny that Cavour's politics was correct for the era; but 'they proposed to build a modern State in Italy and they produced a kind of bastard.' Macchioreo has written that it might be dangerous to hypothesize alternate possibilities in history, but it is more dangerous "to make what happened in the past not only the real history—which it is—but also the ideal history." And Salvemini dryly remarks: "I do not remove my hat before accomplished facts."

6

Problems of Philosophy

THE fundamental innovation introduced by Marxism, according to Gramsci, 'into the science of politics and history is the proof that there does not exist an abstract, fixed and immutable "human nature" (a concept which certainly derives from religious thought and transcendentalism), but that human nature is the totality of historically determined social relations.—'. Again 'man is a process, and precisely the process of his actions—"human nature" is a complex of human relations—this answer includes the idea of "becoming"—it denies "man in general"—'.

Marxism is liable to the distortion of an over-popular mechanical presentation, necessary in certain conditions but carrying dangerous implications. Gramsci was severely critical of Bukharin's *Historical Materialism* and charged it with turning Marxism into a crude determinism.

'Marxism in fact suffered a double revision, was submitted to a double philosophical combination. On the one hand, some of its elements were absorbed—into various idealist currents' (Croce, Sorel, Bergson); 'on the other hand, the so-called orthodox—believed they were being orthodox in identifying Marxism with traditional materialism—'.

'Marxism was confronted with two tasks: to combat modern ideologies in their most refined form—and to educate the masses—whose level of

culture was medieval—the second and basic task absorbed all its strength—the new philosophy developed in a cultural form—absolutely inadequate to overcome the ideology of the educated classes, despite the fact that the new philosophy had been expressly created to supersede the highest cultural manifestation of the period, classical German philosophy—.

'Marxism assumes this whole cultural past—the Renaissance and the Reformation, German Philosophy, the French Revolution, Calvinism and English classical political economy, lay liberalism and the historical thinking, which rests at the foundation of the whole modern conception of life. Marxism crowns the whole movement for intellectual and moral reform dialecticised in the contrast between popular and higher culture.—Marxism itself has become "prejudice" and "superstition"—but it contains within itself the principle for overcoming this.—The mutilation suffered by Hegelian thought was also inflicted on Marxism; on the one hand there has been a return to philosophical materialism and on the other, modern idealist thought has tried to incorporate into itself elements of Marxism—. Only after the creation of the State does the cultural problem pose itself in all its complexity—the attitude preceding the State can only be critical-polemical; never dogmatic, it must be romantic in attitude but with a romanticism that consciously aspires towards its own classical composition.'

Gramsci had the fairness to admit that there is some historic justification for the overemphasis on the determinist element in popular Marxism. He wrote:

—The determinist, fatalist mechanist element has been an immediate ideological "aroma" of Marxism. A form of religion and of stimulation (but like a drug necessitated and historically justified by the "subordinate" character of certain social strata)—mechanical determinism becomes a formidable power of moral resistance, of patient and obstinate perseverance. "I am defeated for the moment but the nature of things is on my side over a long period."—a substitute for the predestination, providence etc. of the confessional religions—among the masses as such, philosophy can only exist as a faith. Besides, one may well imagine the intellectual position of a man of the people—. The most important element is undoubtedly of a non-rational character, of faith—in the social group—. The fact that he was once convinced, as if by a clap of thunder, is the permanent reason for the persistence of the conviction, even if he is no longer able to argue for it.

Yet, for Marxist theory itself, it is wrong to stop at this immediately practical level. Gramsci continued:

'But when the "subordinate" becomes the leader—mechanicalism appears at a certain moment as an imminent danger—fatalism has only been a cover by the weak for an active and real will. This is why it is always necessary to show

the futility of mechanical determinism, which, explicable as a naive philosophy of the masses—becomes a cause of passivity, of imbecile self-sufficiency, when it is made into a reflexive and coherent philosophy on the part of the intellectuals—

‘With regard to the historical role played by the fatalist interpretation of Marxism, one could pronounce a funeral eulogy of it, vindicating its usefulness for a certain historical period but precisely because of this urging the necessity of burying it with all honours. Its role could be likened to that of the theory of grace—which, however, culminated in the classical German philosophy with its conception of freedom as the awareness of necessity.’

Therefore, Gramsci argued: Bukharin’s ‘reduction of Marxism to a sociology represents the crystallisation of the deteriorating tendencies already criticised by Engels—which consists of reducing a conception of the world into a mechanical formula giving the impression of having the whole of history in one’s pocket.’ Thus ‘—provisional systems are built up which do not have the necessary inner coherence but only the mechanical exterior.’

‘To judge the whole philosophical past as madness and folly is not only an anti-historical error, since it contains the anachronistic pretence that in the past they should have thought like today but it is a truly genuine hangover of metaphysics, since it supposes a dogmatic thought valid at all times and in all countries, by whose standard one should judge all the past.’

Bluntly, Gramsci puts forward his view on two philosophical problems—the questions of foresight and of the materiality of the world. To quote once again:

‘In reality one can foresee only the struggle and not its concrete episodes; these might be the result of opposing forces in continuous movement, never reducible to fixed quantities—Foresight reveals itself therefore not as a scientific act of knowledge, but as the abstract expression of the effort one makes—. The problem of the foreseeability of historical events needs to be posed correctly, so that an exhaustive criticism can be made of mechanical causation—it is absurd to think of a purely “objective” foresight. The person who has foresight in reality has a “programme” that he wants to see triumph, and foresight is precisely an element of this triumph—reality is the result of the application of the human will to the society of things—to put aside every voluntary element and calculate only the intervention of other wills as an objective element in the general game is to mutilate reality itself—every act of foresight presupposes the determination of regular laws of the same type as the laws of the natural sciences. But just as these laws do not exist in the absolute or mechanical sense which is supposed, so also this view takes no account of the other wills and their application is not “foreseen”—. The active politician is a creator, an awakener, but he neither creates from nothing nor moves in the turbid

void of his own desires and dreams. He bases himself on effective reality, but what is this effective reality? Is it something static and immobile, or is it rather a relationship of forces in continuous movement and change of equilibrium?—“What should be” is therefore concrete, and is moreover the only realistic and historical interpretation of reality.’

It may be said at this point that Gramsci was leaning towards free will perhaps too heavily. Does not freedom operate within, and only within, the framework of a much stronger necessity? Otherwise, the danger arises of a ‘free’ will mistaking necessity itself in a given situation, for it is the characteristic of free will to soar above reality, witness the utopias in the record of history. In one passage at least, Gramsci went to the length of suggesting that we need not wait for the ‘fullness of time’ to bring about revolution; he stressed the creative initiative of the Russian proletariat in the Bolshevik victory, evidently minimising its own specific necessity, not grasped by contemporary orthodox Marxists, but existing none the less and open to a deeper analysis. Can one suggest that Gramsci had not quite transcended his early Crocean idealism? At least, many of his comrades did hint at it.

Here is Gramsci’s key passage on the materiality of the world:

‘Engels’ formulation that “the unity of the world consists in its materiality demonstrated—by a long and laborious development of philosophy and the natural sciences” contains the very germ of the correct conception, because it appeals to history and to man in order to prove objective reality’ (and not to crude common sense, a relic of the religious belief in Divine creation prior to the coming of man).—‘We know reality only in its relation with man—knowledge and reality are becoming—without thinking of the existence of man, one cannot think of “thinking”.’

But Lenin in his *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* did not brush aside “crude common sense” (in the section for example—Did the Earth exist prior to Man?). And Engels himself in his *Feuerbach* did categorically deny that Marxism was a third philosophy independent of the two great camps into which he divided all philosophy. After all, the subtle Hegelian dialectics was only the highest kind of Idealism, and Marxian praxis is basically Materialism, however distinct it might be from its traditional form. Gramsci was not wrong in his philosophical reflections, but it is all a question of the proper emphasis.

7

Nature of the Party

In the *Quaderni del Carcere*, the best known part is of course the *Modern Prince*. Many subjects are touched upon here, but undoubtedly the central theme is the nature of the Party. These musings have been aptly described as essays on the science of politics in the modern age.

Gramsci’s interpretation of Machiavelli is per-

haps one-sided and over-emphatic but quite plausible. He held that in the *Prince*, Machiavelli wanted to persuade the revolutionary forces in Italy of his time 'of the necessity for a "leader"—to accept him with enthusiasm even if his actions might be or appear to be contrary to the widely-held ideology of the time, religion.' He was aiming at the 'process of formation of a determined collective will, for a determined political end.' His *Prince* is a historical example of the Sorellian "myth", that is of 'a political ideology which is not presented as a cold utopia, or as a rational doctrine, but as a creation of concrete phantasy which works on a dispersed and pulverised people to arouse and organise their collective will.'

Machiavelli's amoral technique was obviously nothing new to men born into the tradition of government. He therefore must have been addressing "those who do not know", the ordinary people. Machiavelli indeed helped to improve conservative practice—but then this has happened with Marxism as well; the analysis in the *Capital* has helped also the intelligent industrialist. This must not conceal Machiavelli's revolutionary approach, which indeed explains 'the whole of anti-Machiavellianism.'

Today, however, 'the modern prince'—cannot be 'a real person, a concrete individual'; the role can be played only by an 'organism—already provided by historical development—', 'the protagonist of the new Prince in modern times cannot be an individual hero, but the political party—which—aims—to found a new type of State.'

Every party is 'the expression of a social group'; but Gramsci admitted the possibility in certain conditions of the existence of several parties representing only one social group or class. Actual historical development does confirm this undogmatic proposition. Equally striking is Gramsci's formulation that even 'if no other legal parties exist, there always exist other parties either in fact or in tendency which are legally uncoercible—political questions are reclothed in cultural forms—' in such circumstances. Recent historical experience supports this assumption.

If the aim of the Party is to work for a new State, and if Machiavelli's Prince is followed in the task of rousing and organising collective will, the first question is when can the conditions for the development of a national-popular collective will be said to exist. The answer requires a historical-economic analysis of the social structure of the country. In Italy, the traditionally opposing forces have been the landed aristocracy and 'landed property in all its forms'; the positive factors lie in the existence of 'social groups, conveniently developed in the field of industrial production.' But the formation of the popular will is impossible 'unless the great mass of peasant-cultivators breaks *simultaneously* into political life.' History since 1815 has shown that the traditional classes try to prevent the national-popular collective will, to maintain their "economico-corporative" power, the worst form of feudal society. The historic task of the Modern Prince in Italy will require therefore the overcoming of such resistance.

It 'must and cannot but be the preacher and organiser of intellectual and moral reform—the programme of economic reform is precisely the concrete way in which every intellectual and moral reform is presented.'

In the structure of the Party can be seen three indispensable levels or layers: the rank and file, the cadres, the leadership—the second being the necessary link between the first and the third. The leadership is of primary importance in one sense—'it is easier to form an army than to find captains.' The task of the leadership is a heavy responsibility; 'since defeat in the struggle must always be foreseen, the preparation of its successors must be an element of equal importance with what is done for victory.' The Party also integrates three things: 'doctrine, personnel, and the real historical movement.' Doctrine must not be artificially super-imposed 'like a suit, and not like the skin which is organically produced.' The movement constantly reacts with the other two elements and causes an incessant struggle 'to raise the organism to ever more elevated and refined collective consciousness'.

Gramsci pointed out the hard truth that 'there do in fact exist rulers and ruled.' Therefore, within the Party the leadership has a vital role. The problem is to find out how to rule in the most effective way, to know the lines of least resistance in winning the obedience of the led. But of course the question remains whether one assumes a perpetual division between leaders and followers or believes the gap to be only a historical fact in certain conditions. Then it becomes necessary to study 'how to minimise the fact and make it disappear.'

A new State cannot be created merely by 'generous heroism and passion; the essential qualities are discipline, perseverance, coherence, and scorn for irresponsibility.' But spontaneity cannot be ignored totally; its recognition at least gives 'the mass a "theoretical" consciousness of creating historical and institutional values.' The Turin communists, Gramsci recalled, did not scorn spontaneity—'it was educated, directed, purified of everything that hindered its fusion—with modern theory.' The real political action of "subaltern" classes is the unity of spontaneity and discipline, 'since it is mass politics and not simply an adventure of groups who address themselves to the masses.'

Party discipline is 'certainly not a passive and supine acceptance of orders, a mechanical execution of assignments' (though in certain circumstances even that becomes necessary)—but a conscious and clear understanding of the aims to be realised. Discipline in this sense does not annul individual personality—but merely limits the will and irresponsible impulsiveness.

Remarkable indeed are the warnings of Gramsci against some evils in Party functioning—against arrogance, dictatorial habits, the immersion into economism, the trend of extremism—warnings which sound almost prophetic.

Party arrogance is worse than the 'national arrogance' deprecated by Vico. 'Those who—carry on a policy of arrogance are certainly to be suspected of very little seriousness.' One consequence is

sectarianism which is 'a form of personal "patronage"—and lacks the party spirit which is the fundamental element of "public spirit"—' It is characteristic of such self-deceit to 'belittle the adversary' and to dismiss him by neglecting 'considerations that might support his position', and this is simple demagoguery.

Dictatorial habits foster the belief that 'obedience ought to be automatic, should come about without the need to show its "necessity" and "rationality"', or even that it is beyond discussion.—So it is difficult to extirpate the criminal habit of neglecting to avoid useless sacrifices.—Therefore, after every defeat it is always necessary to look into the responsibility of the leaders.— Instead of that 'the masses—are "kept busy"' with moral sermons, with sentimental-goads, with messianic myths of an awaited fabulous age, in which all the present contradiction and poverty will be automatically resolved and healed.— In this way, 'parties—are not always able to adapt themselves to new tasks and new periods—bureaucracy is the most dangerously habitual and conservative force; if it ends up by constituting a solid body, standing by itself and feeling independent from the masses, the party ends by becoming anachronistic— Democratic centralism is 'an elastic formula' after all it lives to the extent to which it is continuously interpreted and adapted to necessity.' 'The police function of a party—is regressive when it aims to repress the live forces of society and maintain a superseded anti-historic legality—'

Economism, which so often pervades a Party, was, Gramsci thought, the 'offspring of liberalism'; it had 'very little/relationship with Marxism.' It is

allied to another variant of anti-Marxism also, namely theoretical syndicalism.

Extremism which sounds so revolutionary can be linked up with mild economism, its opposite, through syndicalism. Electoral abstention of all kinds and rejection of any compromise are two familiar forms. Abstention is covered by the unrealistic slogan—"so much the worse, so much the better"; banal statements are extended to every representative system, even non-parliamentary ones; but elections do provide a necessary measure to test 'the effectiveness and ability to expand' of a Party, its capacity to persuade the people.— As for compromise so often denounced by purists in principle the necessary process of hegemony presupposes that the interest of the groups over which it is to operate has to be 'taken account of'; that the leading group has to make some sacrifice; that a certain balance of compromises be formed. '—if the union of two forces is necessary to conquer the third—the only concrete possibility is compromise'. Aversion to compromise can be traced back to historical economism with its 'natural laws' and belief in 'fatalistic finalism', leaving no room for voluntaristic political initiative.

It is refreshing to find such freshness and bold thinking on the part of a practising Marxist, a founder and the present inspirer of a major Communist Party, its topmost leader before Fascism snatched him away, a contemporary of the first Soviet triumph with its overwhelming impact. In spite of some gaps and flaws, the quality of the thought of Antonio Gramsci has indubitably enriched the arsenal of Marxism and is indeed worthy of our most serious study today.

Science and Technology in Pakistan

TAPAN DAS

PAKISTAN has still a long way to travel to attain a worthwhile position in science and technology compared to the progress made by her neighbouring India and other developing countries in the world.

The Ayub Government, which has been at the helm of power for the last ten years and primarily responsible for this state of affairs in science and technology, however, sought to excuse itself by pointing to the traditional handicaps, apathy to science on

the part of a section of population, and mainly the limited resources which lacked the support of "moneyed class" to give a boost to science education.

Since Pakistan's independence in 1947, the country's scientific and technological progress has had a chequered career in many respects. Official statements have been made that Pakistan started with only two Universities, which had fallen as her share along with their science departments. But it got no good technical institute

as it existed in India in a few places at that time. Scientific research received a great set-back and languished to a great extent due to the migration of technical personnel to India.

In Pakistan, scientific research is now conducted by Government sponsored research councils and institutes and universities. But a favourable factor that exists in many developing countries—research undertaken or promoted by the industrial sector—is not in existence in Pakistan.

According to the findings of the Pakistan Science Commission, six different research councils mainly constitute the entire field of scientific research: (i) The Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR), (ii) The Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), (iii) The Agricultural Research Council, (iv) The Medical Research Council, (v) The Council for Works and Housing and (vi) The Irrigation, Drainage and Waterlogging Council.

Another establishment, the National Science Council, coordinates their efforts and makes suggestions to the Government on policy matters. The Government has a unit of its own, the Scientific and Technological Research Division, which also controls the National Science Council, the Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, and the Atomic Energy Commission.

While four out of the six organisations have been left at the formative stage for a long time under the pretext of paucity of funds, a huge sum is being spent without much tangible results on PCSIR and the PAEC. The expenditure on PCSIR in 1966-67 approximated Rs 1,76,00,000 and that on PAEC Rs 5,00,00,000. Nearly a million rupees have been spent on Agricultural Research Council, and the Pakistan Medical Research Council has accounted for Rs 3 lakhs only. The Council for Works and Housing showed a nil figure in 1966-67.

A paltry sum of Rs 1,80,000 was spent on Drainage and Flood Control Research Council. This deliberately low spending on this important project has raised misgivings and protests from the common people, particularly those from East Pakistan, their Province being the persistent victim of floods, cyclones and other natural calamities every year.

The Ayub Government's allegation of apathy on the part of a section of the people, finds clear manifestation in the attitude of these affected millions. The suffering masses find no reason to support the Government's so-called efforts which do not help

them in their struggle for survival against the extremely hostile natural conditions. It may be worth mentioning here that several recommendations made by the Irrigation, Drainage and Waterlogging Council have remained unimplemented for years together.

Only the PCSIR has drawn attention and sympathy from the people of Pakistan due to a few worthy achievements. It has four laboratories, with a wide range of activities, at Karachi, Dacca, Lahore and Peshawar. Two more laboratories under this organisation are also being equipped in East Pakistan. Ironically, even the meagre contribution of this organisation has served only the few "fortunate industrialists" of both the wings.

Here, again, it is somewhat intriguing that it is only this privileged class, whose contribution is almost nil to the Government's efforts for scientific progress, that has cornered the fruits of national achievements in the field of science and technology. This class has always kept itself aloof from these scientific organisations intended to serve the people.

The other research organisation to attract public attention is the Pakistani Atomic Energy Commission with its single unit at Nilore, near Islamabad. It has a 5-megawatt swimming-pool-type reactor, producing radio-isotopes. The PAEC has also set up two research-cum-training centres at Lahore and Dacca. The Commission has an ambitious power development programme based on atomic fission. The work on a 137-megawatt power reactor at Karachi is progressing and the unit is expected to start functioning by the end of 1970.

Another power reactor is to be established at Rooppur in East Pakistan with Soviet assistance. A team of Soviet experts were in Karachi recently. The USSR has already undertaken to work out the project's economic and technical feasibility under an agreement signed in April this year. The preliminary works, including the designing of the proposed plant, has already

begun in the Soviet Union. The feasibility report, likely to be ready by early next year, would establish the maximum size of the plant, its operating efficiency and cost economics of the fuel found in East Pakistan.

The Agricultural Research Council is mainly engaged in sponsoring research projects in different research institutes. The remaining three organisations exist merely as establishments and are not provided with any facilities to start their work.

Science education in Pakistan at the school level could make no headway as a result of the Government's failure to provide adequate financial resources. The schools are also suffering from several other handicaps like want of ample scientific apparatus and science teachers of real talent.

Among the Universities, numbering seven (apart from the engineering and agricultural ones), the one at Islamabad alone can be regarded as somewhat properly equipped. Lack of funds keeps most of the universities stagnant, with the private sector conspicuously remaining silent to the appeals to lend a helping hand to Ayub's welfare programmes.

Pakistan started its Second Five Year Plan with 300 research scientists enjoying a pride of place. Today, the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission employs nearly 265 scientists in addition to 160 agriculturists, engineers and medical doctors. The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research has 750 scientists, according to official sources. By 1965, more than 300 of them were sent abroad for advanced training. An equal number was also understood to be receiving training abroad.

According to the statistics collected by the National Science Council, Pakistan spends only around one quarter of one per cent of her gross national product on scientific research, compared to Rs 400 crores allocated for defence in 1967-68. This works up to 6.1 per cent of Pakistan's GNP at current prices and 40 per cent of the country's total revenue.

PRIME MINISTER IN LATIN AMERICA

MAINSTREAM editorial of October 19 referred to "the pointlessness of the three-week jaunt" to Latin America by the Prime Minister, claiming that its purpose and results are "both obscure".

If this judgement is read along with the article by Sri Lajpat Rai in the same issue of the journal, the anomaly will be obvious. Sri Lajpat Rai writes:

"The winds of revolution are blowing over Latin America. The journey towards fundamental change, a part of the greatest movement of world history, has entered the phase of revolutionary upheavals and this gives the continent a formidable aspect of a smouldering volcano which might burst with an irresistible force at any moment."

Does this not indicate that Latin America is today one of the most significant regions in the world, with which our people and our Government should not

only get acquainted but come closer? For long Latin America was a sleeping continent, only left to be exploited by the native feudal landlords and giant US Companies. At that time, it was possible to ignore the Latin American countries as they had practically no independent existence of their own. But in the last decade, all this has materially changed, not only in Cuba but in other parts of Latin America as well. At the conferences of non-aligned states, the first at Belgrade in 1961 and the second at Cairo in 1964, the Latin American states were conspicuously active; while in the UN, they can no longer be taken for granted by the US delegation. The tensions coming up in the US sponsored Alliance for Progress also underlines the same trend. In fact, Latin America is no longer Uncle Sam's backyard as Jawaharlal Nehru described it over thirty years ago.

Under the circumstances, it is good statesmanship for India to get closer to the countries of Latin America, and Smt Indira Gandhi has done the correct thing in undertaking this strenuous tour, thereby demonstrating not only India's interest in these countries but also underlining the importance that this country attaches to the emergence of this far-away continent on the world scene.

New Delhi

Swaha

(The remark on the Prime Minister's Latin American tour in *Mainstream* editorial was by way of a passing reference; it was by no means a complete assessment. The point raised by Swaha has relevance no doubt, provided the tour offered opportunities for acquaintance with the new forces at work in Latin America today. As for Sri Lajpat Rai's observations, it may perhaps be useful to refer to his concluding article in the current issue.—Editor)

THE PRESS AND THE PROFESSOR

I am thankful to Sri J. D. Sethi for giving me the opportunity to write on a subject about which I have been thinking for a long time. His attack on Sri C. N. Chitta Ranjan (*Mainstream*, October 19, 1968) for defending the cause of the non-journalist employees of newspapers and his tirade against the journalist fraternity provides an occasion to study the common disease of

self-righteousness. My only regret is that Sri Chitta Ranjan, despite being an able journalist, has been unable to reply to Sri Sethi's invectives.

As a teacher in Delhi University Sri Sethi belongs to a respected profession. He is one of those resourceful academicians who move among people who matter, people who constitute the 'Establishment' and even a

few high salaried journalists who happen to wield considerable influence on the top ministerial and bureaucratic echelons. Therefore he is in a unique position to keep himself better informed about what happens in this kind of world than in his own. It is an enviable position which not all academicians enjoy. No one should grudge an academic his privileged position as it is accor-

ded to him as a matter of right. But should we treat him as a sacred cow?

Sri Sethi has raised some basic questions, the reply to a few of which has been given by Sri Chitta Ranjan. But still more basic questions remain unanswered. For example, feeling safe in his own glass house Sri Sethi asks: "Why, for instance, should journalists get Government accommodation at subsidised rates?" I do not belong to the class of journalists who enjoy subsidised Government accommodation, but I should like to ask him: Why, for instance, should Readers and Professors in Delhi University get almost free accommodation? Those who have visited the University campus have an idea of what this accommodation is like. Each bungalow with its half a dozen rooms, spacious lawns, servant quarters (which in most cases are let out), and garage, can be the envy of even a high-salaried journalist. If journalists are not a class apart, which I think they should not be, why should academicians get the privilege which Sri Sethi would very much like to be denied to a few journalists?

The same 'public' in whose name Sri Sethi has fired the salvo against journalists would like to know a few more things about our highly-prized academicians. He has informed the 'public' that journalism is 'the least productive industry' in the country, a claim I dare not dispute, and has also talked about 'capitalism of the proletariat'. But let us, for a moment, look into Sri Sethi's world. I make Delhi and its University a case study, though readers are no doubt aware that conditions are much worse in less fortunate provincial universities and colleges.

A Professor's maximum salary is nearly Rs 2,000 a month. In most cases he also happens to be the head of the department, which means a lot. On an average he teaches five periods a week, which comes to 20 periods a month. After deducting the holidays, which are nearly six months in a year, he is able to teach 120 periods in a year. In

most cases he depends on obsolete notes which he might have jotted down at the beginning of his career. If we tally the total teaching hours against the money he has drawn in a year, he gets nearly Rs 100 for a period of 50 minutes. This is a conservative estimate, because I know a number of Professors who prefer to take only two to three periods in a week. The same is the case with Readers who receive a maximum salary of nearly Rs 1,500 a month. It comes to Rs 18,000 in a year, 144 periods and nearly Rs 63 for a period of the same duration. The lecturer's lot is different from the above two categories. He has to teach 18 periods in a week and draws a maximum salary of Rs 1,100 a month.

Actually the hierarchical working in the University is to be seen to be believed. Generally the Professor-cum-head of department behaves like a mini-Czar with the entire academic staff dancing round his little finger. He can make and unmake the careers of hundreds of his colleagues. He presides over a vast empire of departments in his discipline in about 32 affiliated colleges. His is the last word in selections and appointments. Merit, as Sri Sethi should have come to know by now, is not always the criterion. As a member of the upper echelons of 'academic capitalism' he should be aware of the whims of the heads of departments, the recommendations and the nauseating manoeuvres that precede an appointment. Thereafter young and ambitious lecturers spend the best years of their academic career in keeping the mini-czar in good humour, hoping to be promoted as Reader. This they do knowing that merit and honesty are seldom the stepping stones. In the provincial universities and colleges the situation is worse.

Sri Sethi's vituperative indictment of journalists reaches the climax when he attempts to startle the 'public' by stating that "a journalist does not require more than a gentle tug from his employer to go sniffing around Government offices and

foreign embassies (embassies are never internal) for business deals, political tale-carrying or any other type of 'to-ing and fro-ing' that does not fall strictly within his duties as a journalist." This is true. It cannot be denied. It is a sweeping statement, nevertheless. The number of 'to-ing and fro-ing' journalists can be counted on the fingers and all journalists are not in Delhi.

I would like Sri Sethi to climb down from his high pedestal to discover his own world. People who have had the opportunity to observe the so-called all-India conferences of university teachers—Science, economics, history and political science conferences—have a fair idea of what happens there. The 'public' should as well be informed of this aspect. Often plagiarised 'papers' are dished out which few delegates bother to listen to, since they have already submitted their own papers or know that like theirs the one being read is no less an attempt at plagiarism. Generally the conference hall has a deserted look. But there is intense activity in the canteens or the corridors of the conference venue. What do the delegates do or talk about? They unscrupulously lobby for securing examinerships, distribute areas of influence in relation to examination papers, which indeed is a very lucrative business, or arrange mutual visits. For attending these conferences or seminars they are paid first class railway fare and given many other amenities by their institutions. Even our legislators can learn a few lessons in real-politik by observing the election of office-bearers on these All-India bodies.

Sri Sethi has referred to 'tycoons' and their 'stooges'. There is no denying the fact that there are tycoons and there are stooges. This is a reprehensible aspect of the newspaper industry and no decent journalist would like to associate himself with it. Journalism is not a 'noble' profession as Sri Sethi's is. But is he aware of the utter disgrace into which the academic profession has fallen? There are indeed exceptions as in journalism, but

the overall picture is more distressing than in the newspaper industry. This is particularly so because teachers have been taken by the 'public' as moulders of the character of the nation's youth. I do not wish to go into details since the 'public' has some idea of all this through sons and daughters studying in these 'temples of learning'.

The academic world has its own 'tycoons'. They have earned huge profits by writing 'without tears' and 'made easy' books. In fact, there is a scramble among them to dish out as much trash as they can and bring down our once high standards of education. Some of them have shares in the book industry and many others are specially commissioned by publishers. Education is no more a noble profession. It is a business. The teaching shops scandal is also well known.

The 'public' should also know that our academicians have their Meccas in Princetons, McGills and Wisconsin. They strive hard to somehow wangle an invitation or scholarship with a view not to acquiring more knowledge but amassing money. What right have they to desert this country after getting education at the nation's cost and stealthily migrate to dollarland at a time when their country needs them most? The public should know of the

scramble in Delhi University caused by the Ford Foundation announcement of Rs 5 crore grant. A section of teachers and students recently gathered to protest what it called the danger of massive penetration of American influence in the University. The gathering ended in a fiasco after another group of teachers and students invaded it shouting pro-American slogans.

Sri Sethi also chides journalists for their subservience to the 'tycoons' and angrily asks why they did not share their income with the poorer employees. He should know that working journalists' associations all over the country raised funds in support of the striking non-journalists and called one-day token strikes even in establishments which had implemented the awards. But what did the Delhi University teachers do when thousands of Delhi's school teachers went on strike, were jailed and victimised few months ago? In what way did the Delhi University teachers express their solidarity with the inferior being in the schools?

Is Sri Sethi aware of the tremendous disparity that exists between Delhi University teachers and those in the hundreds of schools managed by the Corporation? According to the latest grades announced a secondary school teacher will get a maximum salary of Rs 700 after put-

ting in nearly 20 years' service. Even if we work out the figures at the optimum it is like this: A secondary school teacher has to teach 36 periods a week, or 144 periods a month, which means Rs 5 per period. The primary school teachers' case is even more pathetic. / His basic salary is Rs 118 a month—less than the amount a professor earns within 50 minutes. It was the newspapers and not the high-salaried University teachers who demanded justice for these teachers. I have seen dozens of protest meetings by school teachers in Delhi during those days and people from all walks of life came and expressed their support to them—but nobody from the University campus bothered to come and offer even lip-sympathy. There are indeed some young progressive University teachers whose conscience was stirred but they could not do much. The journalists' leaders might have been settling their scores in the shadow of Peking-Moscow quarrels but I assure Sri Sethi that the teachers are fighting only to eat a few morsels and to have a new pair of shoes for their children. I would not have written this letter had he used the *Mainstream* columns to express his solidarity with the teachers' lot. Or does he want the disparity to continue?

New Delhi

Ayub Syed

Law Relating to Contempt of Court

Twenty-three jurists and senior advocates of the Supreme Court of India have issued the following statement calling for definition of contempt of court by Parliament in the light of the conviction of Sri R. K. Karanjia, Editor of Blitz News-magazine, on a charge of contempt of court. The text of the statement is given below:

WE have read a news despatch from Nagpur that the Editor of *Blitz* Sri R. K. Karanjia surrendered in obedience to the sentence of fifteen days imprisonment passed on him by the Nagpur Bench of the Maharashtra

High Court for having committed contempt of Court by his articles "Whom will you fine for Konarak and Khajuraho". It is unfortunate that he who consistently stood for progressive and popular causes has had to under-

go imprisonment. Beyond expressing our view that the sentence of imprisonment was needlessly severe, we do not propose to discuss the merits of that conviction which after the Supreme Court's refusal to grant Special

Leave has become final.

We, however, wish to take this opportunity to place before the public in general and our Parliamentarians in particular certain aspects of the law relating to contempt of Court which in our view need to be altered and amended.

The power to punish *brevi manu*, that is, to punish summarily for contempt of Court did not have its origin in any special need felt to give the judiciary any power to protect its dignity or authority, etc. But this power peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon system had its origin in the power that the King of England had to punish persons for disobedience of his orders. As Blackstone says "In contemplation of law the King is supposed to be always present in the Courts which administer justice which is a power, an emanation of the royal prerogative." It is needless to go into the history of how this law of contempt developed. It is enough to emphasise that no statute defines what is contempt of Court. From the decisions, three classes of contempt are mentioned:

(1) wilful disobedience of the orders of the Court;

(2) interference with the administration of justice; and

(3) scandalising the Court by personal attack of an individual judge or bringing into contempt the judicial process itself.

It will be seen, therefore, that in the field of scandalising the Court the final decision as to whether it is contempt of Court or not is largely dependent upon that imponderable which may be described as the mental make up of the judge. One judge may hold it to be a contempt, another may hold that even though somewhat harsh and unfair, it does not exceed the bounds of legitimate criticism.

Secondly, as this law has been administered by the Courts, a particular attitude has developed which regards anything short of an unqualified unconditional apology as a further aggravation of the contempt. For instance, the person charged with contempt will not be allowed to say "I did not wish to commit any con-

tempt, I maintain that I have not exceeded the limits of legitimate criticism but if the Court thinks that it amounts to contempt, I am prepared to apologise unconditionally." Such a statement is regarded as not an apology at all but as a further aggravation of the contempt. The result is that as soon as a notice is given of contempt, the person charged has no option but to grovel before the Court abjectly or go to jail.

A third feature is that as at present any person even those who may have an oblique motive or a personal axe to grind can move the Court to take action for contempt against another person. This lends itself a great deal of mischief. In England, only the Attorney General can lay such information.

In the olden days, there was no limit to the imprisonment that could be awarded by the Court. But in India since 1952, the maximum sentence of six months has been imposed. However, a vague undefined law of contempt leaving it to individual Judges to determine what is or what is not contempt of Court in any particular case, specially in the field of scandalising the Court, cannot be harmonised with the fundamental right of freedom of speech guaranteed by our Constitution. In fact, there are several countries in the world which do not have such a law of punishing summarily for the contempt of Court by the Court itself.

There is no reason why a contempt of Court should not be treated like any other offence requiring a proper prosecution,

evidence and a finding as to guilt. The summary procedure leaves a great deal in the field of vagueness and is therefore a grave danger to the freedom of speech.

We wish that Karanjia's going to jail might at least start this enquiry into the law relating to contempt and that the Parliament may take up the matter to make a law. In 1962, there was a Bill intended to make definite the law relating to contempt but after the Bill was circulated, it appears to have lapsed. It is high time it is taken up by the Parliament and that a new Bill should be drafted and circulated for public opinion and then made into a statute.

V. K. Krishna Menon
A. N. Mulla
A. S. R. Chari
D. P. Singh
R. K. Garg
S. C. Agarwal
Uma Datta
Paras Nath Tiwari
Shiva Pujan Singh
K. Mehta
Shyamala Pappu
K. L. Mehta
R. K. Bhatt
Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar
Sumitra Chakravarty
M. K. Garg
N. S. Das Behl
Santok Singh
Anil-Kumar Gupta
J. S. Talwar
H. K. Puri
R. A. Gupta
Vineet Kumar

October 25, 1968

SUPREME COURT HEARING

Mainstream Contempt of Court Case

THE appeal filed by Sri D. R. Goyal against the judgement of the Bombay High Court in 1965 convicting him for contempt of court came up for hearing before the Supreme Court on October 23, 1968. The arguments were heard for two

days on October 23 and 24. The judgement has been reserved.

Sri D. R. Goyal the then editor of *Mainstream* had published an article in the paper (April 24, 1965) entitled "The Story of a Loan and Blitz-Thackersey Libel Case." In the said

article attention of the public had been invited to certain "extraordinary features" of the Thackersey-Blitz Libel suit in which Mr Justice Tarkunde of the Bombay High Court had passed a decree of three lakhs of rupees against Sri R. K. Karanjia, the editor of *Blitz*. It was pointed out that shortly before the judgement was delivered certain loan facilities were granted to Khare, Tarkunde and Co. a firm of architects, in which the brother and some other relatives of Mr Justice Tarkunde were interested, by the Bank of India of which Sri Krishnaraj Thackersey the plaintiff in the libel suit was a Director and had participated in the decision of the Bank for affording the said facilities.

It was also pointed out in the said article that New India Assurance Co. had stood as guarantors for the aforesaid credit facilities and Sri Thackersey and his solicitor Sri Petigara were Directors in the assurance company.

The proceedings for contempt of court were initiated against Sri Goyal and Perspective Publications (P) Ltd., the publishers of *Mainstream*, at the instance of the State of Maharashtra on the ground that the said article charged Mr Justice Tarkunde with unfairness and lack of impartiality in the discharge of his judicial duties. The defence of Sri Goyal was that the impugned article was based on an article published in the Gujarati Weekly *Prajatantra* dated April 10, 1965 and as there was no refutation of the facts stated therein he believed the same to be true and therefore had not committed any contempt of court. The High Court, however, found that the article suggested that the damages of rupees three lakhs had been awarded to Sri Krishnaraj Thackersey by Mr Justice Tarkunde because two directors of the Bank of whom he was one in favour of credit of rupees ten lakhs being granted to Messrs Khare Tarkunde (P) Ltd. in which his brother admittedly was interested and that the said article had a tendency to harm the reputation of the learned judge as a judge and not merely

as an individual and thereby it brought the administration of justice in the Bombay High Court into utter disrepute. The High Court imposed a sentence of one month's simple imprisonment on Sri D. R. Goyal and also imposed a fine of rupees one thousand.

Sri Goyal served the sentence and paid the fine but filed an appeal in the Supreme Court.

In support of his appeal the counsel for Sri Goyal, Sri S. C. Aggarwal, submitted before the court that the article as interpreted by the High Court imputes bias and partiality to Mr Justice Tarkunde and true allegations of bias against a judge cannot in law amount to contempt of court. It was submitted a settled principle of law that bias whether pecuniary or otherwise vitiates the decision of a judicial tribunal and such decisions have been regarded as nullity by the courts including the Supreme Court.

In pointing out that a particular judgement had been delivered by a biased judge the appellant had not interfered with the administration of justice and had in fact advanced the course of justice and such an act could not amount to contempt of court.

In support of the aforesaid submissions the counsel for the appellant placed reliance on the decisions of the English courts wherein it has been laid down that the contempt of court by scandalizing the court or the judges had become obsolete in England and it was submitted that on the same principle the courts in India should also ignore such criticism of the courts or judges. It was also submitted that the law recognises a distinction between contempt and libel and an attack on a judge may be defamatory but would not amount to contempt of court.

Reliance was also placed on the decision of the Privy Council in the *Hindustan Times* contempt case wherein it was observed that if the facts were as alleged in the report they called for criticism and did not amount to contempt of court. It was also submitted

that in Australia the courts have taken the view that allegation of want of impartiality against a judge did not amount to contempt of court and the said decision of the Australian High Court had been approved by the Supreme Court of India in an earlier judgement.

The counsel for the appellant further submitted that in India freedom of speech and freedom of Press were fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution and the position in India was not very different from that in the USA. It was submitted that the courts in the USA have given a very narrow interpretation to the scope of the power of Court to punish for contempt of court when it affects the right to freedom of speech and Press and the same principles should be applied while construing the scope of the power to punish for contempt of court in India. In this regard attention was invited to the decision of the Supreme Court of USA wherein it was held that an article imputing bias to judges does not constitute a clear and present danger to the administration of justice and does not amount to contempt of court.

The appeal was heard by a Division Bench consisting of Mr Justice J. C. Shah, Mr Justice V. Ramaswamy and Mr Justice A. N. Grover.

Sri S. C. Aggarwal appeared for the appellant.

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Discussion

This week the discussion on Czechoslovakia includes an editorial article from the Polish Communist organ, Trybuna Ludu, criticising the stand of the Communist Party of Italy. This is followed by the continuation of Dr P. C. Joshi's article from last issue, while a further instalment of Scrutator's Reply to Professor Susobhan Sarkar's contribution in Mainstream (October 19, 1968) is published,

Polish Reply To Italian Communists

TRYBUNA LUDU

THE difficult decision to send military units of the five Warsaw Treaty states to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (CSSR) taken in the face of the imperative need to render assistance to the socialist forces of that country has been used for unleashing a feverish campaign by all anti-Communist forces.

The American imperialists, while expatiating on the "defence" of the sovereignty of the peoples, launched their criminal intervention in Vietnam; the successors of Hitlerism—leaders of the policy of militarism and revanchism in the West German state of "extraordinary laws", the aggressors and occupationists of the Arab lands from Tel-Aviv, the militant anti-Communists of London, Paris and Rome, the fascists of Madrid, Lisbon and Athens and the South American gorillas have all let loose not only a clamorous but equally cynical campaign against the Socialist states. Unfortunately, representatives of some Communist Parties in the capitalist world also thought it opportune to condemn this necessary step taken by the five Socialist states.

The Statement of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Italy dated August 21 noted that "the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Italy considers this decision to be unjustified

and not in conformity with the principles of the autonomy and independence of each Communist Party and each Socialist state, with the need for defending unity of international Communist and working-class movement."

The Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Italy expressed the hope that "the Italian democratic forces will be able to take a responsible stand and avoid any unnecessary rashness..." These hopes have proved to be futile, which, incidentally, could be foreseen—the Italian "democratic forces" have launched an offensive not only against the Socialist camp but also against the Italian Communists whose stand was attacked by propaganda weapons of the heaviest calibre.

And if Comrade Amendola, one of the leaders of the Communist Party of Italy, stated that the decision of the five states "seems to us to be a difficult and unacceptable departure from the persistent struggle for peace which had always been the main feature of Soviet policy", then it fully coincides with the unbridled campaign of the imperialist forces, particularly in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), which are striving to undermine confidence in the peaceful policy of the Socialist camp, and, while again kindling the psychosis of

a "Soviet threat", to restore the climate of the "cold war".

Though subsequent events have confirmed that it is only thus that the stand of the Communist Party of Italy should be understood, the leadership of the Party not only did not change its position, but in its main document, namely, in its statement of August 23, it expressed it still more emphatically. And when during the succeeding period many Communist Parties, as, for instance, the French, the British and the Australian, came to understand the implication of their initial positions and, above all, began to emphasise the positive significance of agreements reached in Moscow, the leaders of the Italian Party continued stubbornly attacking the decision of the five Socialist states. Moreover, they have gone still further in the direction of undermining the unity of the international forces of socialism, openly coming out against holding another meeting of the world Communist movement.

Such a stand is in obvious contradiction to the realities of the modern world in which the independence of "each state" should be viewed in its inseparable connection with the fundamental line dividing Europe and the rest of the world into two systems, with the ruthless struggle which is going on nowadays bet-

ween socialism and imperialism on an international scale and in which all means are used—peaceful and non-peaceful, political and military, economic and ideological. It is the socialist social system which is the basis of the sovereignty of each country of our system.

These principles are observed in the political practice of the Socialist camp, which find their confirmation in the bilateral and multilateral relations among the Socialist states and in their joint activity and solidarity in defence of the security and sovereignty of the states and peoples living under the threat of the aggressive policy of imperialism.

The Italian Communists demand observance of the principle of "quest for different ways of gaining and building socialism." It is correct to speak of ways leading to socialism but not of ways leading away from socialism, in the opposite direction, to the restoration of the old order. And it was precisely such a way which had been acquiring a more distinct shape during the political evolution of the CSSR in recent months.

At its January Plenary Meeting the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPCS) proclaimed a programme for improving and strengthening socialism in the country—a task especially difficult when one takes into account the fact that it was laid down much later than in the other Socialist countries. These aims of the CPCS were received with approval by the fraternal Parties which expected that it would rise to the occasion and would do everything possible to strengthen its leading role and prevent the Right-wing and reactionary force from utilising the transformations underway in the country against socialism. But it turned out otherwise. Under the influence of the revisionist campaign directed at discrediting the Party, splitting its unity and bringing about an opportunistic distortion in its political line, the Party was deprived of power, while the counter-revolutionary forces with support from imperialist centres again stepped

up activity to undermine the mainstays of the socialist system with a view to severing the CSSR from the socialist community.

What was the implication of this evolution from a Socialist republic to a republic of the bourgeois type? It meant sliding into dependence on imperialism, above all the FRG. Could a passive attitude towards such an evolution inside a Socialist state amount to respect for the sovereignty of Czechoslovakia as is demanded by the Italian Communists? The culminating point in this negative process was bound to reduce Czechoslovakia to the status of a pawn in the imperialist game against the USSR and the other Socialist states.

Thus, it is a matter concerning not only the problem of Czechoslovak sovereignty; it is a matter concerning the security and sovereignty of the other European Socialist states, the state interests of the entire socialist camp, especially Poland and other neighbours of Czechoslovakia. The severance of Czechoslovakia from the Socialist community would have led to a change in the correlation of forces on which the peace and security of Europe have been based since the victory over Hitlerism in 1945.

It is on such a change in the correlation of forces in its favour in Czechoslovakia that imperialism banked while supporting the revisionist and counter-revolutionary forces so as to split the unity of the Warsaw Treaty countries in this sensitive spot of Europe and to undermine their defence potential. It was precisely this that was not taken into account by the CPCS leaders in the past months.

At the last plenary meeting of the CPCS, Comrade A. Dubcek admitted that in evaluating the internal situation the leadership of the CSSR had not always taken into account the strategic and general interests of the USSR and other Warsaw Treaty countries.

How could the allied states reconcile themselves to such an immediate threat to the vital

positions of socialism and peace in the very heart of Europe?

Is it admissible that the necessary steps taken in defence of the historic gains and supreme interests of socialism should be questioned by Marxists, by Communists?

As is known, from the very moment crisis phenomenon appeared in the life of CSSR, during numerous bilateral and multilateral contacts over a period of a number of months—at the talks in Dresden, in the course of negotiations in Moscow, at the Warsaw meeting and finally at the meetings in Cierna and Bratislava—the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, our own and other fraternal Parties persistently strove to achieve a political settlement of the growing crisis. For this purpose our Parties abstained for a long time from public polemics, not reacting even to open attacks by the Czechoslovak press against the fraternal countries. Unfortunately, all those attempts proved to be fruitless and it was only the entry of the allied troops that has created the conditions for a real political settlement of the crisis in Czechoslovakia.

Let us be frank. As the declaration of the leadership of the Italian Party speaks of the "internationalist duty of determining one's responsibility", a considerable share of responsibility for such a course of events rests on the leaders of the Communist Party of Italy. They rendered unconditional assistance to the line pursued by the leaders of the CPCS, unconditionally approving the entire process of the so-called democratisation during which the anti-socialist forces became increasingly active. Following direct contacts with the leaders of the CPCS, the Italian comrades, disregarding facts, accepted wishful declarations as reality. It was so in May, that is, following the difficult negotiations in Dresden; it was so again in July after the five-Parties letter from Warsaw to the CPCS. *L'Unita*, organ of the Italian Party, persisted in describing the processes taking place in the CSSR as a "hope of the Communist movement", a

"great opportunity for renovation", the "renaissance of socialism in the spirit of freedom and democracy", and so on and so forth, without even mentioning the onslaught of the counter-revolutionary forces. Instead of this the Communist Party of Italy, accusing other Parties of interfering in the "internal" and "sovereign" affairs of the CPCPS, actually engaged itself in interfering only on the side of the revisionist forces, which only strengthened the leaders of the CPCPS in their erroneous line and confirmed the "madmen" of the Czechoslovak press, radio and the TV in their fixed conception that they were paving the way to the "future of socialism."

The other Communist Parties in the West did not share this evaluation. The Central Committee of the French Communist Party pointed out at its last plenary meeting: "In the recent period our Party did not conceal its anxiety over certain aspects of the situation existing in Czechoslovakia. Under the cover of the correct slogans of the CPCPS, aimed as they are at developing socialist democracy and improving the style and methods of the work of the Party and Government, the forces hostile to socialism began to act. The activities of these elements did not meet with a proper political and ideological rebuff."

However, at the last plenary meeting of the Communist Party of Italy, Comrade L. Longo declared that "the Czechoslovak Party has retained its leading role in the country and is in control of the situation" and that "nothing threatened the socialist gains", that its "foreign policy continues to be traditionally loyal to the friendship and cooperation of the CSSR with the USSR and other socialist countries."

In the appraisal of Comrade Longo, "the main political line of the CPCPS was correct", though "there were moments of vacillation and uncertainty during its implementation."

In May this year, after, returning from Czechoslovakia, at a meeting in the Gramsci Institute Comrade Longo declared

that "transition to a higher level of democratic development" was observed in the CSSR. What does this "higher level" mean? Is it the attacks against the Communist Party and its achievements, or the freedom of action for various organisations with clearly anti-socialist programmes or the freedom to attack the fraternal socialist countries?

The mistake committed by the Communist Party of Italy in evaluating the events in Czechoslovakia consists in that while ignoring the political reality in Europe, it views the problems of Socialist countries exclusively through the prism of its own position, its own political tactics and election struggle.

The free play of the political forces under the conditions of a bourgeois regime is advantageous for the working class for it facilitates its struggle for political rights and economic demands. However, in the conditions of the CSSR, that is, of a country where the question "who will win" was solved as long ago as 1948, and which for twenty years now has been advancing under the leadership of the Communist Party along the road of socialist construction, the free play of the political forces would have meant not progress to a higher level but regress down to a lower level of development, opening the gates for the Right-wing and counter-revolutionary forces.

Voicing its protest against the decision of the five Socialist states and the thereby joining the propaganda campaign un-

leashed against them, the Communist Party of Italy at the same time appeals for "solidarity in struggle against imperialism and in the struggle for peace", stresses the need for a "particularly intensive quest for unity of all anti-imperialist forces." It is difficult to reconcile the one with the other for it is impossible to promote solidarity and to work for unity while attacking the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and repudiating the necessary steps taken by the five states of the Socialist community in the face of the threat to the vital interests of socialism and peace.

The experience of history, past and recent, shows that in spite of contradictions the bourgeoisie displays solidarity when faced with a threat to its class interests. It displays solidarity on the question of non-recognition of the sovereign rights of the GDR, it displays solidarity, in spite of public protest, with the American policy in Vietnam, it displays solidarity in supporting Israel against the progressive movement of the Arab countries. It shows solidarity in defending the position of neo-colonialism against the liberation movements. Such are the facts.

And the solidarity of the Socialist forces is the only weapon to counter the solidarity of capital.

The present period serves as a criterion for understanding by each fraternal Communist and Workers' Party of its supreme internationalist duty.

Trybuna Ludu, Sept. 8, 1968

Socialists Must Think—II

P. C. JOSHI

(The first part of Dr Joshi's article appeared in last week's Mainstream)

AN inseparable part of this concept of hegemony (of one big and powerful country or the other, over the weaker group of countries), has been the universalisation of the Russian model of socialism and

the overt or covert rejection of the possibility and permissibility of non-Russian paths of socialist transformation. This opposition to experimentation in the forms of socialism found its sharpest expression first in the case of the

Soviet attitude towards Yugoslavia. It is also manifest in the reproduction of the Russian model of socialism in each of the East European countries (except Yugoslavia) and of the Russian type of Communist Party in most countries. The Czech movement (as the Hungarian and Polish uprisings in the past) basically symbolise the revolt against this hegemony and against the mechanical transplantation of the Russian model in their countries. It is an assertion of the sovereign right of a country to evolve a structure of socialism suited to its needs and aspirations. The Soviet military intervention and indeed the continuing villification by the Soviet ideologues of the 'Action Programme of the Czech Communist Party' only shows that the dominant leadership of the Soviet Party still considers the Russian form of socialism as the only valid form for East European countries; and that it is determined to assert its hegemonistic role by continuing to sit in judgement over others and to even use force for the suppression of any major deviation from the path dictated by them. (It may also be indicated here that the Chinese Communists also revolted against the Soviet hegemony. But the tragedy is that the Chinese seek to establish *their* hegemony over the Asian countries in the same manner as the Russians have done in relation to the East European countries).

This background enables us to evaluate the second basic issue concerning the relationship of socialism and democracy.

The political structure which evolved in the Soviet Union after the October Revolution was characterised as the dictatorship of the proletariat against the oppressing classes and democracy for the toiling masses. But in due course under a combination of external and internal circumstances the dictatorship aspect of the Soviet political structure was tremendously strengthened and its democratic aspect was gradually weakened and even undermined. The erosion of the democratic process assumed an alarming dimension as the

dictatorship over the 'enemies of revolution' became so pervasive as to necessitate dictatorial regulation and regimentation of thought; the result was forcible suppression and, even physical persecution, of dissent and diversity of ideas and opinions. The association between the Soviet model of socialism and authoritarianism has been so prolonged and persistent that the non-socialists have time and again posed the question whether socialism and democracy can at all be had in a single package.

Here it may be stated that socialist intellectuals from socialist and non-socialist countries have questioned this proposition. In their view the deformation of socialism specially in respect of the political superstructure originated from the fact that the first socialist society appeared in an economically underdeveloped and politically backward country. Thus the authoritarian political system evolved in the context of "the drive to develop at break-neck speed a backward country under the threat of foreign aggression and in the face of internal resistance." Even if this hypothesis is accepted as an explanation of the *genesis* of the authoritarian political structure, it fails to explain its *persistence* even after the economic transformation. This phenomenon of *persistence* seems to contradict the orthodox Marxist viewpoint about the dependence of the political superstructure on the economic basis. It now seems that political forms, at least under certain circumstances, can be relatively independent of economic relations of production and that they may play an active role in shaping the form of economic relations and in perpetuating them. Thus the economic form of socialism itself may be moulded or distorted by the political forms evolved by a country and in the formation of which past history and tradition play a vital role. Further, the discontinuity in forms of economic organizations may often be accompanied by continuity in the forms of political organization.

All this is only to emphasise that in the Soviet Union the eco-

nomic revolution may have now created the pre-conditions for a democratic revolution but that the former has certainly not been accompanied nor been immediately followed by the latter. It may not be far wrong to predict that as and when democratisation makes a significant headway in the Soviet society, the economic form of socialism associated with an authoritarian political structure may also undergo far-reaching structural transformation.

What follows from the above discussion is that neither the economic form of socialism evolved by the Soviet Union (or for that matter China) nor the political structure within which this economic form has been evolved, provide a model of democratic socialism or socialist democracy which can appeal to societies committed both to socialism and democracy. The Action Programme of the Czechoslovak Communists assumes a new significance in this background as it seeks to blend socialism with democracy. This is the main reason why it has evoked such a sharp and hostile reaction in the ruling circles of Soviet Union and its allies. This is also the reason why even the use of force has not been spared with a view to blocking its practical implementation. That is why the resolute defence of the sovereign right of each country to evolve its own form of socialism is also to strengthen the search for non-authoritarian and humane forms of socialism.

(Concluded)

READ

India's Agrarian Structure

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by

SULEKH C. GUPTA

Rs. 2

A Mainstream Publication

Reply To Prof Sarkar—III

SCRUTATOR

(The earlier instalments of this Reply appeared in *Mainstream*, October 19 and 26)

IN his contribution (*Mainstream*, October 19), Professor Susobhan Sarkar weighed various arguments which he thought were raised in justification of the Warsaw Powers' intervention into Czechoslovakia. We have already examined his points against the argument of strategic self-defence of Czechoslovakia (in last week's *Mainstream*).

Prof Sarkar next deals with the question of counter-revolution, actual and potential, as a justification for the Warsaw Powers' intervention.

Briefly, Prof Sarkar's argument runs thus: Since capitalist relations of production had not been restored in Czechoslovakia, nor fundamental change effected in her economic base, nor were bourgeois values definitely triumphant, nor the rule and leadership of CP ended, or Western domination established, "vague talk of the victory of counter-revolution is no more than a term of reproach".

Secondly, this question should

Professor Susobhan Sarkar has complained: "I did not 'christen' my contribution as merely 'A Polemical Note' as printed. I called it 'The Czechoslovak Crisis—A Polemical Note for Discussion'—which is not exactly the same thing. The change in title was unwarranted."

As Professor Sarkar's contribution appeared in the section specifically earmarked for Discussion on Czechoslovakia, the words, "The Czechoslovak Crisis" and "for Discussion" were felt to be superfluous, and that the abridged caption conveyed the import of the original. However since the author felt otherwise, we offer our regrets to him.

—Editor

not be decided *ex-parte* when Czech leaders denied the charges.

Thirdly, the military intervention "could and should have waited till further clarification."

Regarding the potential danger of counter-revolution, Prof Sarkar concedes: "That there are counter-revolutionary trends and forces within Czechoslovakia is quite possible, perhaps even natural when capitalist influences from outside do impinge on the borders" and he also admits that the imperialist conspiracy is also "an objective reality." But he says that "counter-revolutionary discontent within the country has been stimulated precisely by the heavy handed Stalinist misrule for 20 years". And he regards the military intervention would amount to "moving back" towards that misrule.

In conclusion, Prof Sarkar says: "There might be a case for intervention if counter-revolution is actually victorious in a country. But to send troops to curb its mere possibility is something like our familiar preventive detention legislation". His thesis is: "In the internal conflict between revolution and counter-revolution, the issue can and must be decided by the people itself."

For one thing, nobody has talked of "the victory of counter-revolution" having been achieved in Czechoslovakia. What was stressed throughout the summer by the socialist neighbours of Czechoslovakia was that the counter-revolutionary forces were fast overpowering the progressive forces and that the Communist Party itself was almost being petrified, thanks to the manner in which the dominant section of its leadership was handling (or refusing to handle) the situation.

As early as April 1968, Dubcek himself warned the Plenum of the Central Committee of Czechoslovak CP: "We would be short-sighted if we overlooked

the revival of certain non-socialist trends, indeed even wrathful calls for revenge". The May Plenum of the Central Committee officially recognised that the danger from the Right was the main danger. It was at this meeting Dubcek himself confessed that "the authority of the Central Committee is ever more declining".

Prof Sarkar says: "The allegation of counter-revolution in progress within Czechoslovakia was not substantiated when the occupation came." This indeed is an amazing statement. On May 1, the notorious Club 231, along with other clubs held open demonstration in Prague calling for "New leaders with clean hands". On May 19, *Prace* published the article by Svitak, leader of the "Club of Committed Non-Party People" showing how step by step the Communists could be removed from power, and that the workers militia should be disbanded.

On June 17, *Literarni Listy*, the writers' union organ, called for the withdrawal from the Warsaw Treaty and the "neutralisation" of Czechoslovakia.

In June appeared the infamous "Two Thousand Words" which gave out a rallying call for the anti-Socialist forces. The CP Central Committee Presidium criticised it saying that its recommendations would amount to "a grave danger for the new policy of the party, National Front and Socialist Czechoslovakia", pointing out that "the danger lies in the appeal inciting to attacks against Party and State officials in districts and Committees, and to use such forms of pressure as strikes, demonstrations and boycotts as well as to set up new bodies outside the structure of the National Front and the State—". It criticised the Two Thousand Words for "tending to incite nationalist

moods, and it formulates questions of Czechoslovak foreign policy entirely counter to the principles of the Party, National Front and the State." It is surprising Prof Sarkar has made no mention of the Two Thousand Words in his Note.

This stand of the CP, however, was challenged by some of its own leaders, thereby totally immobilising the Party in its exposure of the Two Thousand Words. Smrkovsky gave it support, publicly demanding that "the Party leadership should take a positive step forward from its original stand." An open boycott campaign was launched against those leaders of the Central Committee who denounced the Two Thousand Words or took a stand against reactionary elements.

On July 15 came the open attack on Warsaw Treaty by General Prchlik, the then leader of the Security Section of the Central Committee. *Mlada Fronta* called "for a neutral policy with the consent of the great powers or the United Nations" and *Literarni Listy* openly said: "Europe is not threatened with the danger of war, and therefore appeals for the unity of the socialist camp in the face of the threat of armed attack are devoid of serious grounds." In fact, *Mlada Fronta* in its issue of July 10, 1968 was quite candid asking "Let us choose for Czechoslovakia in this restless world the role of Switzerland."

Lest Prof Sarkar disbelieved the authenticity of reports coming from the Soviet and other allied sources, here only the Czech material is quoted. Many more instances can be given, but here only a cross-section has been taken.

What was alarming was that even after the Cierna and the Bratislava Conferences, the process of decline continued in Czechoslovakia. At Bratislava, the Czech leaders signed the Declaration saying: "In the spirit of the existing tradition, in an atmosphere of full frankness, principled action and friendship, the fraternal parties have considered the topical questions of the struggle for socialism, fur-

ther strengthening of the socialist community, the unification of the world Communist movement." The Czech delegation assured there that unbridled anti-Socialist attacks in the press, radio and television would cease; that the activities of anti-Socialist parties would be controlled and that the Party and the State leadership would follow a consistent policy in defence of the interests of the Socialist Republic.

But what happened after Bratislava? Smrkovsky, one of the signatories of the Bratislava Declaration, in an interview some days later, on August 7, declared: "We have got what we wanted. Now however it is necessary to recover the ground we lost in Bratislava."

Mlada Fronta denounced the Bratislava declaration saying that it contained "the same old words which accorded with the old methods of thought and estimation of world events." *Lidova Demokracie* said: "The terminology of the Declaration is somehow out of date and does not satisfy us."

A District Committee of CP at Olomouc was dissolved for having come out in support of the Bratislava decisions. A new signature campaign was started demanding the dissolution of the Workers' Militia. Persecution was started against 99 workers of the Praha automobile plant for having written to *Pravda*, and in this Smrkovsky played a leading role.

Side by side, the openly anti-Communist violence began in Prague itself. On August 8, the building of the Central Committee of the Communist Party was attacked: "The crowd outside remained and around 10 o'clock started shouting 'Come on out', 'You are afraid', 'Come on out, you swine.' The crowd pushed and battered on the door and threw stones." (This is taken not from *Pravda* or *Izvestia* but from *Rude Pravo*.)

Such a physical attack on the headquarters of the Communist Party taking place at the very capital of a Socialist State can hardly be regarded as a

simple case of youthful outburst.

The leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia signed at Bratislava: "We shall respectfully support the German Democratic Republic—the socialist state of the German working people, defending peace; we shall unremittably support the Communist Party of Germany and those forces fighting against militarism and revanchism, and for democratic forces."

And yet within a few days, when Tito came to Prague, the reception in his honour rang with the chanting of the slogan: "Tito yes—Ulbricht no." Granted this was a spontaneous outburst, what was significant was that Dubcek and other Czech leaders present on the occasion did nothing to make even a formal attempt to tell the crowd that while Tito was welcome, there should be no insult to the leader of another friendly neighbour, an ally, with whom Czechoslovakia had just signed a solemn agreement. Instead, the press, radio and television gave the widest publicity to this slogan.

This episode gives an idea of the way the Czechoslovak leaders almost displayed a cavalier reluctance to implement the Cierna and the Bratislava Declarations. Even by their own conduct, they encouraged the spread of hostility towards other members of the socialist community.

All this cannot be dismissed as only being "stimulated precisely by the heavy-handed Stalinist misrule for 20 years." By taking such a position, Prof Sarkar is only underplaying the active role of the consciously reactionary forces at work. It is in this context, one has to examine the role of outside imperialist agencies in the Czechoslovak crisis and how they forged their links with the counter-revolutionary forces inside the country.

(The Editor regrets that owing to lack of space, *Scrutator's* article could not be published in full this week, and he assures that the remaining portion of it would be published in full in next week's *Mainstream*).

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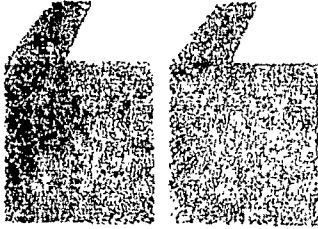
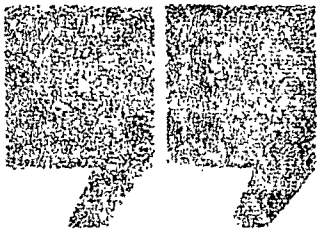
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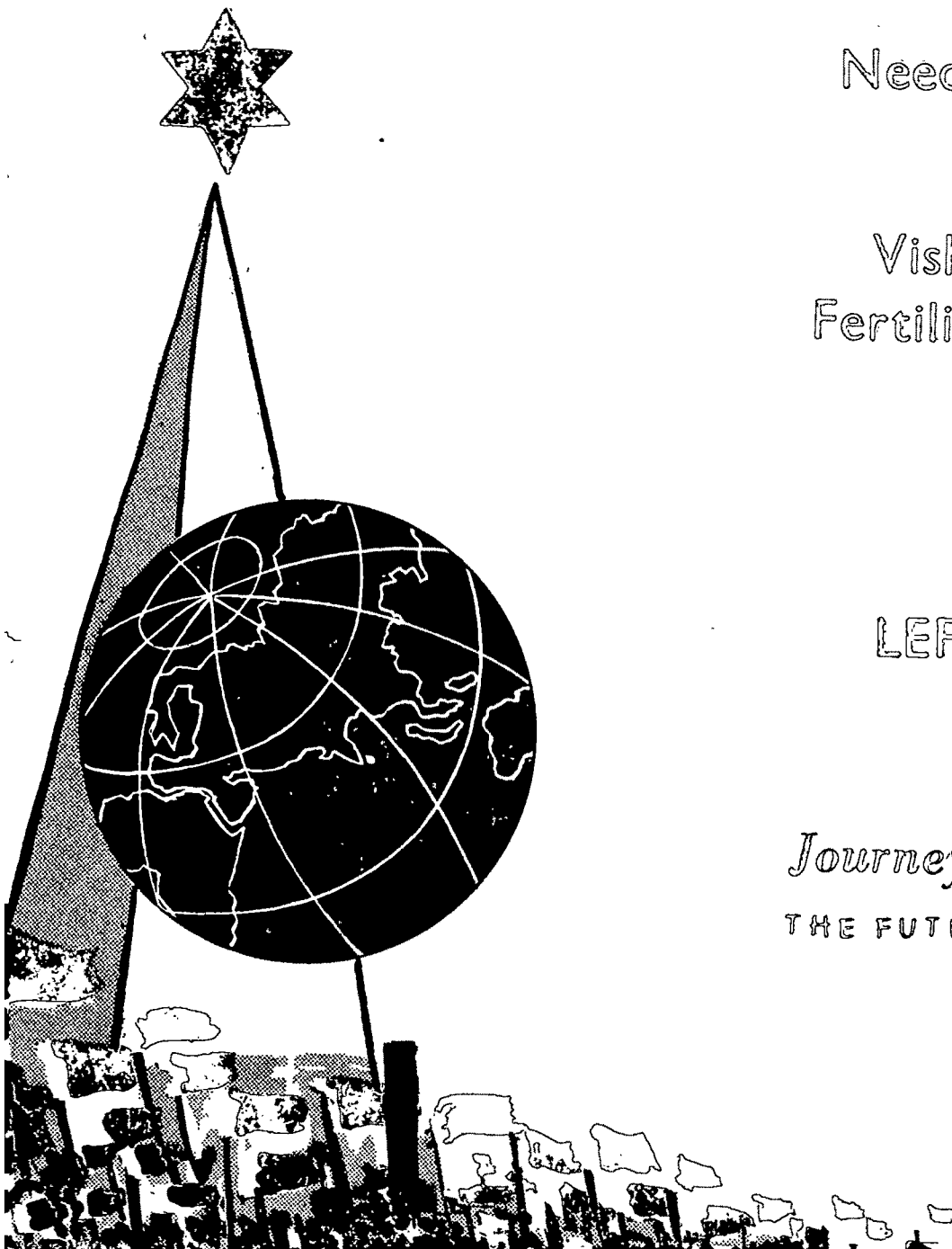
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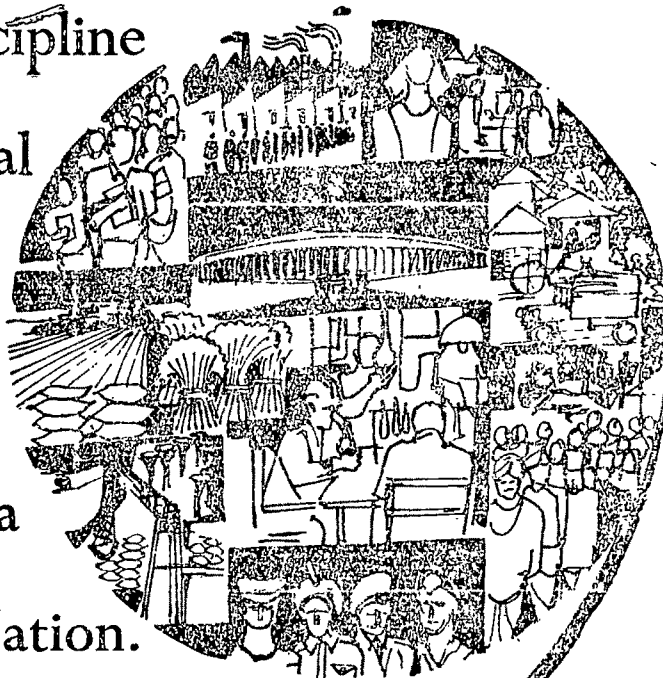
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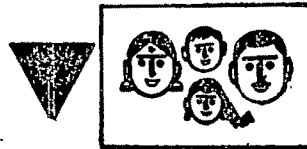
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dayp 68/289

VIETNAM AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA

WITH the cessation of American bombing on North Vietnam and the efforts at serious negotiations in Paris, a new stage is being reached in the politics of South-East Asia. It is imperative that in the emerging pattern of things, India plays a positive and purposeful role in keeping with her national self-interest.

It is on record that fourteen years ago, India enhanced her international status and influence by active participation in the negotiations that culminated in the Geneva Agreements on Indo-China in 1954. The essence of India's stand at the time was to side with the powerful democratic forces that fought and defeated French imperialism. Ever since, over these fourteen years, a more powerful imperialism tried to subjugate the people of Vietnam and today faces a greater fiasco at the hands of the same freedom-loving Vietnamese people, writing with their blood an unforgettable saga of heroism and patriotism. In the changed context, however, the key point remains the same, that is, that the people of Vietnam must have the right to decide their own future freely and without any interference.

It is good that Sri Bhagat, Minister of State for External Affairs, has emphasised this point recently and has correctly reiterated that the guidelines for any settlement in Vietnam have to be based on the Geneva accord. He has clearly elaborated this point by saying that "there should not be outside interference and all foreign troops must withdraw from Vietnam".

The basic point to keep in mind in the formulation of India's policy towards South-East Asia has to be that this country sides with the forces resisting imperialist domination, open or *sub rosa*; that is, it actively participates in all efforts that call for resistance to imperialist pressure, political or economic, particularly those from USA. To do so, it would be necessary that India strives to build up the closest relations with the progressive forces in this region at the head of which stands Ho Chi Minh and his intrepid band who have successfully stood out against the most powerful offensive of US imperialism.

Whatever may be the cross-currents in this region, it does not require much of foresight to comprehend that the Vietnamese leadership under Ho Chi Minh is going to play a very decisive role in the entire politics of South-East Asia.

There have been much talk of regional cooperation, formation of different types of organisations, for getting the countries of South-East Asia together. Some of these organisations have already sprouted

but have not yet proved to be of much relevance. India's policy so far has been to get a feel of the land through bilateral talks and understanding.

In this context one has also to discern very carefully the latest American motivation having suffered a humiliating setback in Vietnam. It is possible that American imperialism, wiser after its Vietnam fiasco, will try to sneak in through devious means and not come out blatantly with the failure of its domino policy.

It is necessary for our country to guard against these new American moves. With our difficult economic situation and powerful forces of vested interest inside the country pressing for a policy of subservience to the dollar, there is likely to be a temptation to go in for these new political moves in South-East Asia inspired or encouraged from Washington. But such a course would bring not only discredit to our national standing among the Asian countries but will be suicidal for our real national interest. Whatever advance we have made in the direction of emancipating our poverty-stricken millions from the terrible consequences of an imperialist-dominated economy, whatever strength, material or moral, this nation has acquired since Independence, has come through reliance on forces ranged against imperialism. It is this cardinal truth which needs to be reiterated once again today as we scan the new vista that has opened up in South-East Asia.

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FOR SURVIVAL AND SELF-RESPECT

Even the worst critics of Kerala Chief Minister Namboodiripad will have to concede that in recent times he has made the biggest contribution by any single individual to fresh thinking on the inadequacies and draw backs of the economic policies pursued so far by the country under the overall guidance of the Centre. It would be exceedingly unwise of anyone to dismiss his call for a "second look" at the policies of the last 18 years and their implementation and for drastic changes in the whole approach, as a mere trick to embarrass the Congress-run Central Government. The questions has been raising, not only in respect of Centre-State relations but also in respect of national ends and means, are fundamental to future national independence, well-being and self-respect. The political leadership at the Centre as well as the planners would be well advised to cast aside prejudices against Sri Namboodiripad and his allies in the Kerala Government, and take an honest look at the course of development in India from the inauguration of planning till this day so as to locate the causes of the steady erosion of national will and purpose in place of their being strengthened as hoped for by the original policy-makers headed by Jawaharlal Nehru. While it is not necessary for everyone to agree with each of Sri Namboodiripad's formulations in this regard, it is clearly necessary for all concerned at the Centre as well as in the States to discuss the ideas presented by him dispassionately and arrive at a new basis for economic development based on the lessons implicit in the failure of the past. To evade this task and take refuge in politics of the kind familiar to all of us, would be little short of

betrayal of the common people who are yet to derive the advantages that freedom is supposed to confer on them.

In this context, the seminar organised by Sri Namboodiripad last month at Trivandrum was of great significance. There is no need to go into the absurd discussion on whether anyone other than the Union Government and the planners are competent to outline a "national Plan." It is obviously open to any group, section or even individual to express opinions on what the shape and content of such a Plan should be. So long as no agency other than the Centre and the Planning Commission can undertake the official formulation and implementation of national Plans, the objection raised to the Kerala Chief Minister or anybody else producing alternative schemes must be deemed politically motivated. The seminar called by Sri Namboodiripad came to certain broad conclusions which not only pinpointed the weak spots of the policies being pursued at present but indicated viable alternatives which can ensure a faster pace of growth on the basis of self-reliance as well as more equitable distribution of the benefits of the planning process.

While there can be no doubt that the planning process was introduced with the best of intentions, it is clear enough that the first three Five-Year Plans, despite the many major projects and schemes, failed to create the atmosphere of self-reliance which they were intended to. It is no doubt true that there was much addition to the national wealth, but then it is equally true that the bulk of the new wealth found its way into a few pockets and did not have any impact on the lives of the vast majority of our

population. Among the most obvious results of 15 years of planning were first, that the Big Business houses in the country became much more powerful than before, controlling not only vital sectors of the economy but even influential sections of the policy-makers and the bureaucracy responsible for the implementation of the Plans; and secondly, that in the case of the bulk of the working people real wages did not improve in the least but often were heavily eroded by the rising prices which the authorities were unwilling or unable to check. Even worse than these was the fact that the years of planning, instead of taking us forward on the road to self-reliance, made us more and more pathetically dependent on other countries, especially the United States, not only for plan projects but even for the most essential of all essential commodities, food. Such dependence had the inevitable consequence of making India subject not only to economic but also to political pressures. It is no accident that this country's forth-right and fearless stand on foreign policy issues, especially those concerning people struggling for their independence gradually gave place to polite words, if not to acquiescence in wrong-doing on the international plane.

The most eloquent proof of the failure of our rulers to implement the Plans honestly and in the nation's best interests is provided by the three-year gap between the Third and the Fourth Plans and by the pathetic efforts to pretend that the patchwork annual Plans made up of what the State Governments consider immediately expedient somehow satisfy the concept of planning. Further proof is provided by the continu-

ing food imports and by the Union Finance Minister's humiliating dash to the United States to beg for props, which however are not forthcoming, leaving the planners and the executive authorities precisely where they were before. Proper advantage has not been taken of the concept made available by the kind of assistance the Socialist countries came forward to provide—namely, assistance to build the economic base to a level that can ensure the nation's independence.

It is in the context of all these facts that the conclusions of the Trivandrum seminar, in which several eminent economists and administrators participated, have to be viewed. The most important of these in the context of maintenance of national self-respect and independence is the recommendation that all forms of foreign economic "aid" infringing on national freedom and impeding the economic growth of the nation should be stopped forthwith. In other words, so-called aid that leads to arm-twisting and dictation of political and economic policies should be rejected without hesitation. It is no secret that it was the Western aid-givers who used their vantage position to compel India to devalue the rupee over two years ago, with known consequences for the national economy. Nor is it unknown that we are unable to establish proper and mutually satisfactory relations with countries like the GDR, Cuba, and North Vietnam because of the pressure exerted by the United States on the strength of the "aid" it gives to this country. The seminar has rightly said that the right course is for India to negotiate fresh agreements with all countries on a commercial basis for the supply of technical know-how and capital goods. A policy change of this kind will certainly

lead to squeezing on the food front; the answer lies in the Government ensuring for itself complete overall control over the production and distribution of foodgrains in the country. If privation in respect of food is more or less equally distributed over the whole country, it will undoubtedly become tolerable, and the people can be expected to put up with it provided they see evidence that it is part of a drive to reduce the nation's abject dependence on foreign sources. Thus rejection of "aid" with strings straight away implies a readiness to reverse the whole approach to the prime question of feeding the people.

Because of its inability to devise appropriate Plan projects and implement them effectively, the Government has been successfully bamboozled into permitting "collaboration" agreements on a big scale. These agreements between Indian and Western monopoly capital are aimed at ensuring that vital sectors of the economy are kept out of the purview of possible public control and at a division of the spoils. The Trivandrum seminar has called for moratorium on export of profits and repatriation of foreign private capital, as also for re-scheduling of repayments of past loans, etc., and for cancellation of all agreements of non-financial collaboration. One aspect of "collaboration" which has been under discussion in recent times is that relating to knowhow. It has been admitted that there been repetitive import of foreign technology, and there are proposals to create a central agency to "coordinate" the imports of knowhow so as to eliminate repetition costing foreign exchange. What is really required, however, as the seminar has pointed out, is that all technical knowhow available within the country should be made accessible to all who need it on the payment of a nominal fee. Foreign consultancy services and turnkey projects should be completely banned. Attempts by Indian monopoly capital to export its surplus finances to other countries should be similarly banned.

Thus it will be seen that rejection of motivated aid from the West has a series of implications for the whole process of planning and development in the country. The very first decision to be taken is the one to end the hold of Indian monopoly capital on the economy at the earliest and to eliminate the unholy alliance between Indian and foreign private capital without further delay. Once steps in this direction are undertaken, all other questions like availability of knowhow and growth of national technical talent will fall into place, since the Government will be the sole agency to deal with foreign countries and their nationals and whatever deals the Government enters into will be subject to parliamentary scrutiny. These decisions however are not easy to take or implement, for the control of private capital on political and economic life is such that its pressure will become irresistible to any but the most dedicated Government. It is not enough to produce ponderous statements on socialism and self-reliance; the test is whether those in power have the courage, dedication and strength to withstand such pressures and undertake a wholesale review of basic economic policies and programmes. Past experience does not give room for much optimism.

The seminar has provided a blue-print for action on the domestic front as well. The export and import trade must be nationalised, and steps taken to minimise import costs by purchasing from the cheapest possible sources. Import substitution must be undertaken vigorously in all spheres. Local efforts to produce substitutes for costly imported products have received little encouragement so far, the reasons being quite obvious. The widespread frustration among talented young scientists in the country is largely due to this attitude for which the politicians and the bureaucracy are responsible.

Ceiling on profits must be imposed and enforced, the excess profits being taken by the State as compulsory loans for develop-

Because of pressure of space, some of the regular features like Communications and Discussion could find no place in this issue. They will be resumed next week.

—Editor, Mainstream

mental purposes in the public sector. The policy of providing subsidies and loans to the private sector must be reviewed; at Bhubhaneswar the then Congress President, Sri Kamaraj, pointed out that the vast sums made available in these forms to the private sector could be fruitfully used by the State to start new industrial and other undertakings capable of meeting essential needs of the people and of providing fresh job opportunities. The proposal was not even discussed subsequently, although Sri Kamaraj was Congress President for almost four years thereafter. Implicit in the suggestion was the idea that public money should not be utilised to strengthen the private sector; but this is precisely what many of our public sector enterprises are doing. Hence the seminar suggestion that policies in this sphere should be revised so that financial assistance becomes available to medium and small industries and medium and small peasants instead of big business houses as hitherto. It has also been suggested that the pricing policies of public undertakings should be redesigned so as "to help the final consumer rather than monopoly capital." Simultaneously the tax structure should be drastically modified so as to reduce disparities in incomes sharply and remove the prevailing imbalance between the urban and rural areas. Removal of regional imbalances should receive top priority.

The clear-cut first steps recommended by the seminar deserve early consideration. First and foremost, all big enterprises owned or controlled by any of the 75 monopoly houses listed by the Monopolies Enquiry Commission should be immediately

nationalised, and administered by national corporations. Individual houses may be permitted to own smaller industries subject to a limit on the total assets of each. Assistance on a much bigger scale than at present should be made available to medium and small scale entrepreneurs and industrial co-operatives; trained personnel should be helped to set up their own small units. Greater public control over all such industries should be ensured.

All new undertakings in basic industry should be in the public sector. National scales of pay should be laid down for management cadre in both private and public undertakings, taking care to cut heavily the prevailing bloated salaries at the top levels. The seminar has also suggested how labour policy should be revised so as to give labour a sense of genuine participation and ensure the equitable distributions of the gains produced by their work.

Among other important measures are the nationalisation of banking so as to divert vast sums from speculation and private business to activity vital to the public interest, honest formulation and speedy implementation of a national food policy ensuring public control of procurement and distribution, implementation of effective agricultural reforms that will remove imbalances in the rural areas and improve the condition of the medium and small peasants and landless labour, etc.

One may not entirely agree with Sri Namboodiripad on questions like China and Pakistan mainly for the reason that peace and mutual goodwill cannot be established by unilateral decisions by India. But it is obvious enough that our long-term

national interest require the early establishment of good neighbourly relations with these two countries. It is also clear that so long as tensions prevail in this region, advantages accrue only to the imperialist powers out to establish their own spheres of influence. Our leaders have been saying that we desire friendly relations with China and Pakistan; unfortunately there have been no reciprocal sentiments from Rawalpindi and Peking. Sri Namboodiripad's repeated emphasis on the need for dialogue with two countries must be taken as an expression of anxiety for the preservation of the nation's long-term interests. It is no doubt necessary for this country to keep on exploring possibilities, but in the final analysis these efforts can succeed only if there is some response.

The whole point is that if our economic policies are drastically modified so as to reduce dependence on the West and reduce also the hold of private big capital on the economy, the possibility of new and purposeful moves in international relations will become brighter. The nation can become strong and assert its independence only to the extent that the people are involved in the processes of change. Such involvement is possible only if the whole approach to economic, social and political problems changes. This precisely is the purpose of Sri Namboodiripad's recent formulations, as also of the series of recommendations made by the Trivandrum seminar. It would be a fatal mistake to try to see these through politically prejudiced eyes and reject them. Whether the Central Government and the planning Commission are capable of undertaking fresh thinking on the many questions involved remains to be seen.

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Salute to Glory

HIREN MUKERJEE

NOT to *la gloire* which warmed one time French expansionism and whetted its appetite, but to a very different brand of glory is the world today offering its homage—the glory of Vietnam, embattled for a score of years and more, never yielding to the frenzied fury of history's most diabolically equipped fighting force, now emerging with her head held high, the story of her heroism inscribed, as with a sunbeam, in the records of mankind.

For all the miserable fanfare with which President Johnson has announced the decision, wrenched from him, to stop bombing North Vietnam and ask for full-scale peace talks, it is clear that US imperialism, with its vaunted might, appears before the world with its tail between its legs. This climb-down was inevitable, but all mankind has noted also its last-ditch effort to cling to brigand power. And so the "intransigents" in the US had been intensifying till recently their barbarous raids on a sovereign country. In September, for instance, American planes dropped on North Vietnam 80,000 high explosive bombs, 12,000 time-bombs and 3,000 containers with pellet bombs intended to maim and kill with maximum cruelty. In October, US warships stepped up bombardment of the DRV coast all the way from Vinh Linh to Ninh Binh, considerably north of the 20th Parallel. The escalation of cruelty was seen in the remarkably augmented employment of giant B-52's during the nine months of this year, the concentration of bombing on dams and dykes, the increasing resort to the use of chemicals, so that hundreds of thousands of hectares, sprayed with poisonous liquids, turned into "dead zones". The diabolism, however, could not help the aggressors, for they

confronted the most heroic resistance and discovered they were inexorably sinking into the mire of their own making. Let alone the Westmorelands and Abramses of the US Command, even if Alexander the Great was resurrected to replace them he could not defeat the wonderful Vietnamese people.

The stupendous heroism of Vietnam (to our ancestors, *Suvarnabhumi*, the land of gold) has supplied a new radiance to contemporary history. The might of America's rulers virtually bites the dust before the determination of a people fighting for freedom. In spite of the United States spending 30 billion dollars or more a year on this dirtiest war in history—a sum which is more than India's total Gross National Product (GNP)—in spite of inducting more than half a million American soldiers, apart from satellite troops, with the most deadly and sophisticated armament, in spite of poison gas and saturation raids and fragmentation bombing, glorious Vietnam has broken the myth of the US as the world's preponderantly powerful State whose writ runs wherever it wishes—it has shown up the US's "front of brass and feet of clay." It has proved that when a people are truly wide awake, even a power so diabolically armed is no more than a paper tiger. The Vietnam victory is a call to us, as to all other peoples, that we should shed fear and pusillanimity in regard to the US. This lesson was rubbed in some time back by little North Korea humbling the US and exposing its sneaking depredations by the capture of the spy-ship *Pueblo*. We need this lesson especially because the US presence is so very much with us.

"There is not enough water in the Pacific", said Nguyen Thanh Le at the official talks in

Paris, "to wash out the crimes committed by the American aggressors and their accomplices." Jean Raffaelli, well-known journalist and special correspondent of *Agence Presse-France*, wrote in *Hanoi, Capital of Survival* (1967) how the US was waging a "war of mass annihilation" and that yet the US's only hope was to "freeze the operations" because they were "ineffective" and "only incite the people's hatred." And most unexpectedly, he wrote also: "The truth obliges me to admit that Marxism and its methods had worked wonders before my very eyes in Hanoi—Marxism was not only beneficial, but also necessary." Predisposed against Marxism and still personally allergic to it, he had yet the honesty to see that an idea can grip the masses and become also a tremendous material force. That force remains hurled against an aggression which is the most lurid and unashamed expression of the bestial methods used by reaction in a desperate effort to reverse, or at least stem, the tide of history. Dyson Carter writes in *New Times* (September 11, 1968) that "the first imperial war" of the United States, as Professor Liska calls the Vietnam story, is officially described by Washington as its first "limited" war, and yet according to *Financial Post*, the latest computer report discloses that on the average Washington pays its military-industrial complex more than one million dollars to kill a single Vietnamese!

All this is, of course, beyond the ken of the pettifogging politicians in power in New Delhi, and it is quite in line for Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to congratulate President Johnson for his "wisdom and courage". Perhaps it is beyond her to see that finding itself in a vicious circle the US tried to break out

of it by military escalation and is now driven to another tactic for which no special plaudits are called for. Srimati Gandhi, however, had seen in President Johnson during 1966, when Vietnam saw the height of his blackguardry, "a man of peace." She might not quite be in a position to say straightaway that the US had no business in Vietnam and after so many sobering experiences must forthwith quit that country and cease meddling the way it has been doing. But there was no need for her to go out of her way and praise Johnson for his "wise and courageous decision," while keeping mum about Vietnam and her wonderful people.

Everything is in keeping, however, for hasn't this country's Government for long refused any trade with North Vietnam, while with impunity exporting trucks and wagons to South Vietnam? Hasn't this country often egregiously failed its duty and responsibility as chairman of the International Control Commission? Hasn't a report appeared, even as these lines are being written, about the DRV Consul-General's speech at a large Calcutta rally being looked askance at by Government, while insolent speeches by the US Ambassador all over the country (and even lately, once, a speech of more than dubious character by a perhaps unauthorised but undoubtedly accredited Czechoslovak diplomat) are lapped up by authority without compunction? Is it not symptomatic of the way this country is going, when at the recent Inter-Parliamentary Union conference at Lima (Peru), the Indian delegation, though led by Speaker Sanjeeva Reddy who is by definition non-partisan, took, entirely without warrant, a pro-Israel and anti-Arab stand and joined avidly in a hooligan sally against socialist countries let loose by a French Senator over the issue of Czechoslovakia? (Almost as soon as the US-brand "democrats" left Peru after their performance, a *coup d'état* took place, illustrating symbolically how in the US sphere of influence "democracy" works!).

This country has other and

In The Spring of Victory

VIEN PHUONG

FOUR years have passed, how fast time flies,
Our forces have grown, like trees in the forest,
Our steps shake the Pentagon,
In our hands, three-fourths of the land.
Immense are the freed areas,
Under this vast sky I haven't met my sweetheart.
It's festival night. How I think of you :
Four years ! And we haven't met.

Only a few words once reached me on a tiny sheet,
Stained with a blood of a young courier :
On her way she had been killed by the enemy.
She died but your letter reached me none the less,
And her own last words were relayed to me :
"She loves you and thinks of you,
In the city she is in the van of the struggle."

And so Saigon has become even dearer to my heart,
For in its streets I imagine your shadow passing
And your voice in the clamour of its multitude
Engaged in earth-shaking struggle !
Festival night ! But blood hasn't dried on the streets of Saigon,
The tyrants want no spring for the people !
Yet joy is in every heart :
Victory is near, put on your new clothes to give battle,
Magnificent is your fight ! Rifle in hand,
I shall walk into the heart of Saigon singing the Song of Liberation,
And plant our flag on this town of glory,
So the Gold Star shall shine over Ho Chi Minh City !

I shall look for you. Put on your new clothes,
When the guns fall silent, wedded we shall be.
Over our free land, in the Spring of Victory,
Two white doves shall take wing in the azure sky.

better things to do than congratulating an arch-'war criminal.' The stoppage of bombing has been forced—no less—on President Johnson. This has got to be the prelude to a real and total withdrawal. Only when this point is cleared can genuine and meaningful negotiations begin. The incomparable daring and character which the DRV and the National Liberation Front have demonstrated make this entitlement absolute.

India's role in this epic story has not been one to make a song about. But perhaps in spite of a sense of shame about our having been more inconsequential than we need have been, one can recall that President Ho Chi Minh, in Delhi some years ago and asked by press correspondents to compare his role in Vietnam with that of Gandhi in India, had said that it was "a wrong question" and that a comparison would be

"foolish", but had added, most significantly : "I and others may be revolutionaries, but we are disciples of Mahatma Gandhi, directly or indirectly : nothing more, nothing less." (cf "*Times of India*", Delhi edition, April 7, 1968). It is permissible to say, during this present Gandhi Centenary year, that Ho Chi Minh, supremely representing his people, is the exemplar—if one man in the world of today is to be singled out—of *abhaya* or fearlessness ; and this quality of fearlessness, rather than the more widely celebrated notion of *ahimsa*, non-violence, was perhaps Gandhi's greatest contribution to Indian life. The flag of *abhaya* floats over Vietnam today. May this country muster sufficient courage and spirit and begin to trail behind that wondrous red blaze of glory !

November 3, 1968

Domino Theory Goes Overboard

K. M. P.

THE Johnson announcement is the beginning of a new era in South East Asia, it is an acknowledgement that the military might of the United States was unable to impose its will on a small Asian nation. It is perhaps proper at this stage to examine the assumptions on which American intervention was based and to see how American withdrawal from South Vietnam will affect the political situation in South East Asia.

The assumption on which Americans acted in South Vietnam is best known as the domino theory. It assumed that if South Vietnam, fell, to what the Americans called communist aggression, one by one the States of South East Asia will fall. It was therefore necessary in their view to defend South Vietnam, for America's whole position in South East Asia, depended on it. The danger was not from Hanoi, American publicists considered for a long time that North Vietnam was not acting on its own but as the agent of Peking. The undermining of this established regimes in South East Asia, they argued would serve the interests of Peking. This in turn assumed that China was pursuing a policy of revolutionary expansion and only the American military presence was holding back the Chinese wolf from breaking into the South East Asian fold.

It cannot be maintained by anyone now that Hanoi is an agent of Peking. China had been opposed to the Paris talks and had made its views clear but North Vietnam had ignored the Chinese view and decided to "talk about talks". The decision of Hanoi to enter into political

discussions too will not please China. Indeed Prince Sihanouk, who is one of prescient observers of the South East Asian scene pointed out that a settlement of the Vietnam problem will be in the interest of South East Asia as a whole, a prolongation of the war will force the North Vietnamese into a state of dependence on China. The fact that Hanoi continues to follow an independent line can be seen from the fact that while Hanoi approved and supported the Soviet action in Czechoslovakia Peking was outright in its condemnation. Vietnam will play a key role in South East Asia, but because North Vietnam happens to be a Communist State it does not mean that it will further Chinese interests. The interests of these States are different and Vietnam can be an effective ally in checking Chinese expansion.

It is even doubtful whether China at present is in an expansionist mood. Except for border clashes it has not launched any major offensives. It is badly frightened, and feels that the United States' presence in South Vietnam is a threat to its security. Moreover the cultural revolution and the factional struggles within the Communist Party is an indication that China is looking inward. Only the certainty that the United States intends to commit aggression on China will lead the Chinese to attack the neighbouring countries. This does not mean that China will not encourage internal subversion and political warfare. There too China's strength is over estimated. The Malayan emergency and the Vietnam struggle has been taken as examples of external subver-

sion. The Vietnam war was certainly not the result of external attempts to subvert the regime, it was a peasant uprising against a regime which refused to reform the agrarian system. Malaya was an exception in the sense that it contained a large Chinese minority who were treated as outsiders. The emergency was result of an attempt by the Malay Chinese to assert their rights by force, very few Malays or Indians participated in the movement. It was thus primarily a communal movement, a revolt of the Chinese in Malaya against the British and the self styled Bumiputras.

The Malaya example is instructive and it underlines the need for a proper integration of the foreign groups into the national community. But even if we take the Chinese communities in South East Asia, as they exist today, no real threat can be seen except in the Chinese state of Singapore. By far and large the Chinese community is middle class—mainly bankers, traders and artisans and it is unlikely that as a community they will go communist. Their attitude to China is ambivalent; they take pride in China's emergence as a great power but at the same time as capitalists they are suspicious of Communist ideology. In any case a community which does not hold power, cannot pose threat of becoming the spearhead of Chinese penetration into South East Asia.

It is moreover open to question whether friendly relations with China in itself or a policy of neutrality does not help a country to maintain its independence. In Burma, which is uncommitted and pursues an independent and

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DMK and The Left

C. N. CHITTA RANJAN

It is rather difficult to see why the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam's performance in the Madras City civic elections last week should have caused such widespread surprise. What should in fact cause surprise is that the city electorate's reaction to the kind of civic administration provided by the DMK, which has been in control of the Madras Corporation for nearly a decade, should have been so long delayed.

The Corporation was never free from corruption—no doubt this is true of virtually all civic bodies in the country—but at no time previously were corruption, favouritism and nepotism so flagrant, unconcealed and rampant as in the last eight or nine years. And yet the DMK was again and again returned in a majority, giving rise to the disquieting feeling that the citizens were no longer shocked by malpractices, that they had begun to think of these as an inevitable part of life.

Even the latest elections, despite the setback suffered by the DMK, have shown that the voters have not altogether overcome their apathy to the prevailing state of affairs, for the DMK has only lost its majority position but still is the largest single party which will dominate civic affairs with the help of its allies. The reason may well be that the people are fed up with both the DMK and the Congress, and in the absence of a third alternative have voted anyhow. The fact that polling was poor unlike on previous occasions has to be viewed in this light.

When the DMK was swept into power in the Fourth General Election, among those most surprised by the development were

the DMK leaders themselves. They had only hoped that the alliance forged with the other non-congress parties would enable them to provide a powerful opposition in the Assembly. When the electorate gave the party a big majority in the Legislature, the DMK was totally unprepared for shouldering the responsibilities of administration.

Power had come to the party five years earlier than expected, and this led to certain inevitable consequences. Even a party which has organized itself properly to assume the reins of office cannot escape the internal pulls and pressures that must accompany the possession of state power. In the case of a party thoroughly unprepared for the eventuality, the impact of such opposing pulls within its ranks can be disastrous. Events in Madras are only proving that this has to be so.

It has often been said half-jocularly that the DMK rode to power on the alliterative eloquence of its many leaders: this is not a joke but the solemn truth. The DMK had nothing to offer to the people except the chauvinistic anti-Hindi platform; it had no clear-cut economic programme or policy. The party's role in the years since its inception had been essentially negative; in a sense this was natural since it had no hope of securing power and had to keep itself going by picking holes in the Congress administration. To secure its position as a major Opposition party this was perhaps sufficient, for people looking for an alternative to the Congress would naturally turn to its most eloquent critics. The DMK stalwarts built a boat with words, and despite Sri Raj-

agopalachari's guidance in the last few years the boat has proved quite leaky.

At least Sri Annadurai appeared to be aware of the need to reorganise the party in preparation for power five years hence, for at the time of selecting candidates for the Assembly last time he insisted that a variety of talent should be brought in so that in the course of five years they could have a group of men capable of understanding the intricacies of administration. He did succeed in bringing in a few able elements, but even before things could settle down power was in the hands of the DMK and Sri Annadurai's belated plan could not be put into practice. Inevitably the tub thumpers who formed the leadership of the party over the last two decades overnight became administrators, and Sri Annadurai, whatever his personal inclinations, could do nothing about it.

On the other hand, he found that if he did not take up the Chief Ministership the personal rivalries among his lieutenants could lead to the disintegration of the party. Even when the party was not in power, Sri Annadurai's major task had been to keep some of his more influential "thambis" from tearing one another's throats. As Chief Minister, too, this has been one of his chief preoccupations. The recent public controversy between Sri Karunanidhi and Sri Mathiasagan provided an illustration of what the Chief Minister is up against all the time.

Till power came into the hands of the DMK it was possible to maintain in public the party's image as a completely

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Lessons of Central Govt Employees' Strike

SATYA PAL DANG

THE one-day token strike of the Central Government employees on September 19 no doubt was an event of major importance for the entire trade union movement of the country. It is but natural that all trade union workers, including those not directly connected with the organizations of the Central Government employees, should be anxious to draw proper lessons from the strike and the events connected with it. I therefore read with great interest Sri Madhu Limaye's article—"Lessons of Central Government Employees' Strike" in *Mainstream* (October 12, 1968).

Sri Limaye has made strong criticism of the leadership of the employees on various counts. According to Sri Limaye :

1. The date for token strike was decided upon "in a most perfunctory and non-serious manner."

2. It was wrong on the part of the leadership to persuade Sri S.M. Joshi to take over as Chairman of the Joint Council of Action.

3. The leadership did not run a vigorous campaign among the Central Government employees nor did it go round the various Railways, Defence and other Central offices, installations and centres to prepare the employees for the token strike.

4. It was necessary to collect a large fighting fund.

5. Every effort was not made to enlist popular support for the strike nor was any effort made to win over the central trade union organizations and federations.

6. The slogan of Bharat Bandh advanced by some leaders of the Joint Council of Action was unreal and therefore wrong.

7. It was wrong on the part of some of the leaders to go to jail by defying bans on public meetings. Sri Limaye has particularly sharply criticized the leadership of the AIRF "whose constituent railway unions ran away from the field of battle long before the first shot was fired in the midnight of September 18-19". He has also charged that some leaders are more interested that "their recognition and their air-conditioned passes be restored" than in the interests of the Central Government employees.

Besides the above, Sri Limaye has disapproved of facts as a weapon of political and trade union struggles.

I am neither competent nor is it my desire to express an opinion on each and everyone of these points. I am writing mainly to express my disappointment at Sri Limaye having become so much preoccupied with negative aspects as not to note, much less bring out sharply, any positive feature.

In my opinion this was an

unfortunate omission in Sri Limaye's contribution. The aim of critical reviews of big struggles should not merely be to 'expose' someone but should be to help the movement to overcome its weaknesses and to rectify the mistakes. One-sided negative appraisal ; however correct by itself ; does not really help very much ; and when it is made in the course of the movement, it can also harm by spreading demoralization etc.

What are the outstanding positive features of the Strike ? The following, I think, will strike any impartial observer :

First, the Draconian Ordinances issued by the Government of India to suppress the strike were far more stringent than the Ordinance issued on the eve of the 1960 strike. Yet, the Government of India failed to achieve its objective of striking terror into the hearts of the employees and ensuring the fizzling out of the Token Strike. There was definitely greater fearlessness despite the threatened repressive measures and greater confidence in their own strength on the part of the employees.

Secondly, the strike was not "a complete failure" as has been sought to be made out by Sri Chavan. Despite the Ordinances and despite all the threats and repressive measures, the strike was almost complete in the Post and Telegraph Departments. In

the Defence department, also the strike appears to have been quite successful. The same appears to have been the position in the Railway workshops.

Railways (excluding the workshops) appear to have been the main weak point. An important reason for this was the division and disruption caused by the INTUC and also the cold feet which some of the AIRF unions developed.

These weaknesses must be noted and proper lesson drawn for future work.

At the same time the Central Government employees who went on strike despite the Ordinances, despite the repressive measures and the opposition of INTUC etc. deserve congratulations. The militant trade union movement in the country cannot but salute them on the way in which they faced the most brutal repression.

If Sri Limaye's contention that the leadership did not run a vigorous campaign and did not do all it could or should have done to prepare the employees for the token strike is correct, all the greater glory to those who struck and the leaders and militants who boldly led them in this. All that Sri Limaye has to say in this contention, however, is "All this preparation (by the Government) was however, not necessary, for the leadership of the Central Government employees organisations, barring a few honourable exceptions, was not in a position to make the strike threat effective." However justified may be Sri Limaye's criticism of the leadership or of some of the leaders, he has not done justice to the rank and file of the movement and those who did lead them.

Thirdly, it is a definite achievement of the Strike that for the first time the issue of need-based minimum wages has become a very live issue on a national plane. The Strike of September 19, 1968 and the sacrifices made by the employees will not go in vain and have certainly brought nearer the achievement of the objective of the need-based minimum wage.

Fourthly, Sri Limaye may be

quite right when he says that the leadership of the Central Government employees has made no effort to win over the central trade union organisations. He is however not realistic when he says that had this been done, "all these struggles, agitations and frustrations (of other employees) could and should have been fused into a mighty working-class action against the reactionary policies of the Government." To think that the situation was ripe for this in September, 1968 is as unrealistic as the slogan of *Bharat Bandh* given by some of the leaders of the Joint Council of Action. It is not necessary to go into all the reasons for this. It is however necessary to take note of one fact. There are elements in the leadership of the employees at various levels who want to keep the Central Government employees aloof and away from the rest of the working class movement. Among sections of employees themselves also there are sentiments in favour of their remaining aloof.

To a considerable extent, this sentiment has been weakened and the resistance of the elements referred to above has been overcome. This is another positive gain of the strike and this will help in the realization of a "mighty working-class action against the reactionary policies of the Government."

The above do not exhaust the positive aspects of the strike but it is not necessary to list all of them here.

There is, however, one more aspect about which I would like to say something: Dealing with the question of public support, Sri Limaye makes the point that wrong and incorrect attitude towards the public on the part of some of the employees brings the whole class into disrepute and costs it public support at crucial times. In my opinion this point of Sri Limaye deserves serious consideration on the part of the all trade unionists in the country.

In the monopolist, capitalist owned industries which are run for profit, workers cannot be expected to have the attitude of all-out effort to increase production etc. because often that results

in their own retrenchment, in rate-reduction, etc. When more production means more profit and not a higher standard of living for themselves nor public good, workers cannot be expected to sweat and slave to increase productivity. Even in the state-owned factories, industries, the workers' attitude towards production will depend upon the nature of the State and its attitude towards the working class and the public. However, the position is somewhat different where the quality of the work of the employees immediately and directly affects the common public.

Take for instance the case of teachers. Whether they are employed in the Government Schools or in private schools, they will lose public sympathy if people form the impression that teachers waste their time with the result that education of their children is a casualty. Or, take the case of Roadways employees. If the conductors are generally well-behaved with the public and honest in their dealings, they will get much greater support from them than if people were to have the feeling that they are rude, that they deliberately do not give the small balance like two-paise etc. More examples of this type can easily be given. The point is that these days, the existence or lack of public support matters quite a lot in the case of every struggle and much more so in sectors, the work in which directly and immediately affects the public. In case of this type it is not only necessary to explain the case of employees to the public whenever there is to be a strike etc. It is also necessary that generally and in day-to-day dealings too, the public should form as good an impression about them as possible. When trade union leaders are conscious of this aspect and seek to educate the members of the trade unions accordingly, not everything will become fine, but good results will definitely follow and the small number of inevitable black sheep will not be able to bring disrepute to a whole class—be it of teachers or conductors or any one else.

Concept of Need-Based Minimum Wage

SATISH LOOMBA

THE one-day token strike of the Central Government employees on September 19 has focussed attention on the concept of a need-based minimum wage. The concept is not new; nevertheless it requires clarification. This is specially necessary in view of the highly misleading and irrelevant arguments advanced by the Government, the employers and their theoreticians and economists to counter the demand of the workers that a national need-based minimum wage has not only become a necessity but is immediately feasible.

What is a need-based minimum wage?

Let us take the case of an unskilled worker doing physical labour for eight hours a day. He is doing some work which requires physical and mental effort. In order to enable him to do so, day after day, it is necessary that he should be assured of certain minimum requirements in the shape of food, shelter, clothing etc. The exact concrete break-up of all that will go into each of the component necessities will naturally vary according to the geographical, social and other conditions in which the man works. Even in India conditions will vary let us say between Kashmir with its extreme winter cold and Kerala. But for a conceptual purpose these can be averaged and we can assume that an Indian worker's requirements are the same anywhere he works in India. The physical contents of such a calculation will constitute the need-based minimum wage in real terms.

Each worker will naturally have to provide the needs of his family. Hence a similar calculation

based on these needs for an average family has to be added on. The total for the family is thus the need-based minimum wage for an unskilled Indian worker.

At the 15th Session of the Indian Labour Conference (New Delhi, July, 1957) an agreement was reached as to what should be the physical requirements of an Indian worker on the basis of assuming that each wage-earner's family, including himself, consists of three adult units. This agreement to which the Central and all State Governments, all employees' organisations and all national trade union centres are parties, reads as follows:

"1. While accepting that minimum wage was 'need-based' and should ensure the minimum human needs of the industrial worker, the following norms were accepted as a guide for all wage-fixing authorities including minimum wage committees, wage boards, adjudicators, etc.:

(i) In calculating the minimum wage, the standard working class family should be taken to comprise three consumption units for one earner, the earnings of women, children and adolescents being disregarded.

(ii) Minimum food requirements should be calculated on the basis of a net intake of calories as recommended by Dr. Akroyd for an average Indian adult of moderate activity.

(iii) Clothing requirements should be estimated on the basis of a per capita consumption of 18 yards per annum, which would give for the average worker's family of four, a total of 72 yards.

(iv) In respect of housing, the rent corresponding to the minimum area provided for under Govern-

ment's industrial Housing Scheme should be taken into consideration in fixing the minimum wage.

(v) Fuel, lighting and other miscellaneous items of expenditure should constitute 20 per cent of the total minimum wage.

"2. Wherever the minimum wage fixed was below the norms recommended above, it would be incumbent on the authorities concerned to justify the circumstances which prevented them from adherence to the aforesaid norms.

"3. As regards fair wages, the Wage Board should go into the details in the respect of each industry on the basis of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Committee on Fair Wages. These recommendations should be made applicable to employees in the public sector also."

Thus what is a need-based minimum wage is clear and there is no scope of misunderstanding on this point. All that is required in terms of the above agreement is to translate the physical requirements into monetary terms at any given price level. Naturally therefore the money quantum of the need-based minimum wage will vary with the price level.

The concept of a need-based minimum wage can be better understood if we relate it to the concepts of a fair wage and a living wage.

The Committee on Fair Wages appointed by the Government of India has this to say about these concepts:

"(a) We consider that a minimum wage must provide not merely for the bare sustenance of life but for the preservation of the efficiency of the worker. For this purpose the minimum wage must also provide for some

measure of education, medical requirements and amenities.

"(b) It will be seen from this summary of the concept of the living wage held in various parts of the world that there is general agreement that the living wage should enable the male earner to provide for himself and his family not merely the bare essentials of food, clothing and shelter but a measure of frugal comfort including education for his children protection against ill-health, requirements of essential social needs and a measure of insurance against the more important misfortunes including old age.

"(c) The attainment of the living wage is therefore, our objective too but nevertheless it is the duty of this Committee to examine how far present-day circumstances permit us to approach the living wage and how a wage that might be considered fair could be fixed having regard to the many limitations that prevent the immediate attainment of the objective. On one point there is complete unanimity of opinion viz., that the fair wage should on no account be less than the minimum wage.

"(d) While the lower limit of the fair wage must obviously be the minimum wage, the upper limit is equally set by what may broadly be called the capacity of industry to pay. This will depend not only on the present economic position of the industry but on its future prospects. Between these two limits the actual wages will depend on a consideration of the following factors and in the light of the comments given below :

- (i) the productivity of labour ;
- (ii) the prevailing rates of wages in the same or similar occupations in the same or neighbouring localities ;
- (iii) the level of the national income and its distribution ; and
- (iv) the place of the industry in the economy of the country."

Capacity of Worker

It is thus clear that in the

opinion of the Fair Wages Committee, the minimum wage is not related to the capacity to pay of the industry or the productivity of labour etc. but solely to the requirements of the workers, or in other words, on the 'capacity' of the worker to live and work.

The issue is sometimes confused by referring to the minimum wages fixed statutorily under the Minimum Wages Act. Under this Act, minimum wages are prescribed through tripartite committees in various industries where sweated wages are paid. The basis of such wage fixing is not need-based. The basis is to secure some relief and advance over the extremely low and sweated wages being paid mostly in unorganised industry.

Hence the concept of a need-based minimum is to be distinguished from the minimum wages paid under the Minimum Wages Act. The workers cannot be denied a need-based minimum wage on the ground that in unorganised industries where sweated wages are paid the wages fixed under the Minimum Wages Act are not fixed by taking into account the norms of a need-based minimum wages.

Differentials for Skill

Once the minimum wage for unskilled labour is thus arrived at and quantified, the next problem is to fix proper differentials for skill. In other words, the need-based minimum norm has to be worked out in relation to each level of physical and mental skill and efficiency required for the various types of work. In such a way the wages for all categories of workers and employees will be worked out. The propaganda being carried on by the INTUC and similar agencies of bourgeois ideology and splitism has no basis that the concept of need-based minimum wage would apply only to unskilled workers. The need of a worker doing a skilled job is, if anything, greater than that of one doing an unskilled job because of the cost of training involved, the higher level of sustenance and the higher cost of replacement by the next genera-

tion of a skilled worker.

Having fixed the need-based norms in terms of money, in a period like the present when prices are rising continuously, there must be a variable component of the wages which will take account of the variations in price level. This is the Dearness Allowance which has to be linked with the cost of living index of the area and which must provide for 100 per cent neutralisation of the rise and fall in prices at all level of wages. If the neutralisation is less than 100 per cent (the money value of each point in the cost of living index is determined by dividing the money wage by the cost of living index figure obtaining at the time when the need-based wage is fixed) then each rise in prices will mean a cut in real wages and will thus immediately push the wage below the need-based level. Full or one hundred per cent neutralisation in fact only freezes the real wages while the nominal or money wage varies according to the rise or fall in prices. Since the need-based wage is a concept which has meaning only in real terms, a variable Dearness Allowance allowing full neutralisation, is an integral part of it.

The rate of neutralisation must be 100 per cent at all level of wages. Since if, as is fashionable today with bourgeois ideologues, it is argued that the Dearness Allowance must only protect erosion in the "food basket" and not in the "total basket", and hence the rate of neutralisation must diminish with higher wages, every wage level will suffer a real cut with every rise in prices. This will also depress the differentials between the various skills and raise other problems.

Phoney Excuse

One of the favourite arguments of those who oppose the demand of a need-based minimum wage, is that such a wage would give more to workers and employees who are already better off than millions of their countrymen like the agricultural labourers.

(Continued on page 26)

Violence in Our Society

P. V. NARASIMHA RAO

GANDHIJI'S concept of *ahimsa* was wide in its scope inasmuch as it comprehended not merely non-violence in action but also non-violence in thought. It was intended not merely to be a code of conduct for social action but a way of life for individual living based on a conditioning of the mind.

It will thus be seen that Gandhiji's concept of non-violence was embedded deeply in the human mind and its behavioural manifestation was only the external corollary.

However, when we generally talk of violence in society we are more concerned with violent expressions of social action than with the mental state and it is in this sense that we believe that violence has been tending to grow in our society. This is a phenomenon one notices not only in our own society but in other societies also as can be seen from the fact that law and order has become such an important issue in the US elections.

When violence in society or group violence is discussed in a comparative sense as between different societies, there is sometimes a tendency to too facilely assume that greater violence in a given society must be due to a greater propensity for violence in the human nature of the individual in that society. This is particularly pronounced in societies which subconsciously or unconsciously believe themselves to be the heirs to a superior culture. We ourselves have a tendency to believe that Gandhiji was born in our midst because in some measure at least we deserved him better than other societies. But a cold appreciation of the trends in our society, which were always there and which in recent years have been further accentuated, would show that this is not necessarily true. If, therefore, there is a growing trend towards violence we have to analyse the mental processes and the social conditions which must be held to be responsible for such a tendency.

During Gandhiji's time, while he himself believed in *ahimsa* both as a positive philosophy in human life as well as the only legitimate means in social action, those who joined him did not necessarily believe in both these aspects. It is well known that several of his followers accepted it as a 'policy' but not as an immutable 'creed'. In the attitude to the

Second World War this became quite clear and Gandhiji was willing to concede that some might not believe in the philosophy of *ahimsa* in its entirety. Even so, what he insisted on was that so far as social action in general and the mass movements in particular were concerned, all those who followed him must be willing to eschew violence as a mode of action. Today the position seems to be reversed, with the result that a number of persons, who individually would neither believe nor indulge in violence, seem to be willing to collectively condone and even encourage its use for what they consider to be desirable social purposes. One of the features of the growing tendency towards violence seems to be not so much in its magnitude or spread as in what one might call a very low 'threshold level' for violence.

The tendency to greater violence which we notice today could perhaps be explained only when we examine the totality of conditions under which we live and operate in society. A characteristic of modernism is its speed. We live in a situation wherein we have no time to pause and think. Our reactions are therefore mostly transmitted from many sources simultaneously and intensively, resulting in a hopeless jumble of unrest, stress and strain. In such a mind, as in that of a long-suffering patient, the propensity to impetuous reaction is all the greater.

It cannot be gainsaid that a good deal of conflict in the interests of individuals and groups supplies the motivation for many of the actions and reactions that are constantly rocking the social fabric. Gandhiji's insistence on the 'trusteeship' concept was perhaps the only possible answer to this conflict. However, in the absence of any effective response to the trusteeship principle—either from the intended trustees or from the proposed beneficiaries—strife cannot perhaps be avoided. Strife breeds hatred and there sets in a simmering unrest which, though appearing subdued in normal times, manifests itself at the slightest provocation. It will thus be seen that in almost every case of large-scale violence, there is a good deal of pre-meditated plotting and more often than not, the invisible hand is much more devastating than the visible one. Further, the real motivation of the invisible hand has nothing to do with the immediate issue which usually triggers off the violence. Thus, violence, as it manifests itself today, is generally neither simple nor sporadic. What is simple and sporadic is the stray incident—any

The author is the Minister for Education, Andhra Pradesh. This paper was read at the seminar held at Hyderabad in connection with the Gandhi centenary.

incident ranging from a quarrel at the Municipal water tap to a private verbal altercation—that serves as the last straw. In many cases, even this incident is concocted to suit the occasion.

When violence breaks out, the immediate reaction of the “common man” is to keep himself out of it and play safe. This attitude puts a premium on further violence and anti-social behaviour. It would seem that the attitude of escape on the part of many people is due in no small measure to their own suppressed feelings of grievance against society in general and the immediate victims of the violence in particular. A good deal of vicarious pleasure, pain and anger could be found to be in evidence on such occasions. Quite often, aloofness resorts to appeasement of the aggressor. This is the result of cowardice and despite its facade of pacifism, it is the very antithesis of non-violence. It breeds in a mind full of selfishness and looking in public consciousness. It would appear, therefore that in a situation of violence, some persons conspire, some connive, some participate and many keep out. Those who can do anything to stop the violence are, however, not to be seen at the crucial moment. Even law and order authorities are found to arrive on the scene only after the first outbursts.

One reason for violent outbursts seems to be a belief that no demand can receive attention unless it is supported by an agitation and no agitation will make an impression unless it is accompanied by some violence. This is partly because our democratic Government has not grown in responsiveness to the extent required in the changed context. This does not of course mean that the pre-independence Governments were more responsive, but then no one expected them to be responsive and that was one of the points cited in favour of self-government. Today our administrative machinery—which after all, is responsible for delivering the goods to the people—is not fully and properly oriented so as to grasp the aspirations of the people and accept them as the prime motivation of administration. The non-official element associated with the governance of the country no doubt tries to be responsive but often finds its purposefulness trammelled by parochial and narrow considerations detracting from the main issue and its merits. The result is a vicious circle which tends to grow more and more vicious while the agitational approach on the part of the people gets more and more accentuated. The agitational approach often leading to violent action cannot, however, be explained solely on the ground of un-responsiveness on the part of Government. It can in fact be traced to a frame of mind which is so obsessed with individual and sectional ends that there is no sense of participation whatsoever among the people whether this means the failure of our democratic parliamentary system or, in the alternative, whether it signifies some other flaw in the mental make-up of the people in the context of a democratic set-up—are questions which require mature consideration.

We have too often assumed that representativeness ensures responsiveness and on this premise believed that the representative institutions of democracy

would automatically be responsive to the demands of the people. This however is a presumption which is not always borne out by facts. In fact, it is doubtful whether even the history of Parliamentary democracy bears this out. The British Parliament was responsive to changes in society long before it became fully representative, while it appears as if our institutions, while being fully representative, are not yet sufficiently responsive. The problem therefore is, how to ensure responsiveness of responsible government. Various organisational devices have been tried both in countries having parliamentary democracy as well as in the socialist countries. Gandhiji himself had several ideas with regard to participatory democracy which might help in this regard.

In most cases, violence is the cumulative result of fear, suspicion and the instinct of self-preservation. From a psychological standpoint, it would seem that an attempt to eliminate fear and suspicion is a good way to eliminate violence. But fear and suspicion can be eliminated only in a situation wherein the lowliest of the low is made to feel secure, not merely by speeches and promises but by actual deeds. In other words, it is possible only in a society *sans* exploitation which Gandhiji considered one of the worst kinds of violence imaginable. For instance, the problem of minorities requires attention in democracy, since there is always the danger of a democracy becoming, as Gandhiji himself put it, a rule by the “brute majority”. This in fact is the problem in a country like the USA where the poor have become a minority. And what is the safeguard for a minority in a democracy?

In this context it has been suggested that social violence may be the result of a feeling that a minority is left with no other means of being heard in a democracy where everyone is hankering after the majority. Would even satyagraha be an effective weapon in such a situation? While in the individual spiritual sense the refusal even of an individual to accept what he considers to be an injustice would be an end in itself, in terms of social action and social results non-co-operation can succeed only to the extent that those not co-operating form a group sufficient in its weight to be taken note of by the rest of the society. If it is not so, and if society can afford to by pass such a group’s non-co-operation, would it have a chance of success? And in such a situation of despair would not the only course left be that of creating violence, since violence has the advantage that no matter how small the group creating it be it will be sufficient to draw the attention of the majority at least due to fear? The role of satyagraha as a weapon for the redressal of what may be purely sectional or minority grievances therefore needs to be considered. Of course, as Gandhiji believed, the effectiveness of satyagraha does not depend on the majority backing it; it depends on the cause itself. But in everyday life the practical utility of satyagraha and the most effective mode of employing it would be very relevant subjects for study.

The most common form violence seems to take

in our country is the destruction of public property. Periodic attempts are made by the Government to inculcate a feeling among the people that State property is in fact the people's property and that as such their indulging in the destruction of public property is nothing but a kind of self-destruction. Yet, why is it that a tram, or a bus or railway property continues to be the favourite target of the attack in mob violence? It is sometimes argued that the reason for this is the form that the freedom struggle had taken. The fight against the British was not merely the fight against a Government but the State itself. Some in fact discern an anarchical streak in Gandhiji's philosophy. But then every revolution is in fact an attack not merely on the Government of the day but on the State itself as constituted at that time. This may explain the fact that revolutions are followed by somewhat dictatorial forms of Government since the concept of a State and of the sanctity of public property have to be re-established after a period in which the very basis of these had been attacked. In our case, immediately after the political revolution leading to Independence a democratic form of Government came into being so that there was no phase in which some of the basic concepts of social discipline could be re-established.

Another feature of the way we dealt with such situations was that more often than not we laid greater emphasis on who did the act—whether he was a student, minor, labourer, woman etc.—than on the nature of the act itself. Does this perhaps explain our generally anti-social or at best a social attitude? Again, while no doubt periodically the idea that State property is people's property is

propagated, very often the Government itself is responsible for confusing the two concepts of Government and State. It may be that a long period of one-party rule also led to this confusion of concepts with the result that in times of crisis the distinction between the two was even more blurred.

Group or mob violence, particularly the destruction of public property, may be only a more extreme form of what are basically anti-social tendencies. There is some reason to believe that such tendencies are increasing even in individual behaviour. Is this because we are a society in transition where traditional values are often losing their hold and no new values have been substituted in their place? This is a problem which would require a more detailed study of the norms of individual behaviour as well as of group dynamics and behaviour. There has to be an evolution of new norms and values in keeping with the changes that are taking place in society. The problem of alienation in an industrial society, the loss of individuality in such a society leading to a feeling of non-participation and insecurity are all factors that need to be recognised in a study of social violence.

*The totality of Gandhiji's thought which encompasses both modes of social action and individual behaviour provides one basis for an analysis of these factors and for the evolution of new norms and values, just as Marxism provides another such basis, while modern sociology may be a third such basis. Whatever basis we adopt a study of the problem is undoubtedly necessary and of the utmost urgency today.

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Small Car And The Common Man

J. W. THOMAS

THE low-cost people's car of the late fifties has now been transformed into the small car. It is quite alive and kicking even after a decade or so of gestation within the files of the Industry Ministry and Yojana Bhavan. The Government is now reported to view with favour the Renault project for setting up a factory to turn out 50,000 small cars every year. The project is to cost about Rs. 26 crores including additional investment in ancillary units. It also envisages import of components from France in accordance with the phased manufacturing programme.

The price of the new car is estimated to be about Rs. 12,000. This is in contrast to the original estimate of Rs. 5-7,000 in 1957 which was further revised by the Pandey Committee in the early sixties to Rs. 9-10,000 per car. And now in 1968 the estimate is Rs. 12,000 which is bound to go up, taking into consideration the faithful rise in general price level every year, by 10-15 per cent by the time cars roll out of the proposed factory. Further, since 60 per cent of the components are proposed to be bought from ancillary industries, the main factory will not have control over the prices of the bought items.

Small car for Whom ?

Since the price of the small car is likely to be over Rs. 14,000 by the time the factory goes into production the number of people who can purchase them at this high price will still remain very small. At present there are about three million cars in India, that is less than one per cent of the people own and use cars. Even after setting up the small car factory not more than one per cent

of the population is going to own cars. It is clear that the new project will not cater to the needs of 99 per cent of the people.

It is estimated that car production in India in 1967 reached a figure of 40,000 whereas for the same period only about 31,000 scooters were produced. At the end of 1967 the number in waiting list for cars was 1.25 lakhs while pending orders for scooters were over three lakhs. It is seen therefore that even the existing production capacity is tilted in favour of the privileged few.

A look around the towns and cities in India will show that public bus transport needs are woefully lacking. It has been estimated that on an average a person using public transport spends four years of his life standing in the queue waiting for buses. So the prior need is to provide more transport buses and vehicles before thinking of the small car factory.

Another urgent need is low-cost transport for the common man such as scooters and small motor cycles. Now there are a few scooter factories in India each producing small uneconomic quantities (3-4000 per year) and each scooter sells at a high price of over Rs. 3,500. The need is for establishing large scooter factories in the public sector with an annual capacity of 1,00,000 each so that a scooter can be sold for less than Rs. 2,000. The amount of Rs. 26 crores earmarked for the small car factory can be utilized for putting up two or three large scooter factories which would be a boon to the common man. The highly commendable work done at the Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute, Durgapur, in

designing a scooter called 'Jawan' using 100 per cent Indian raw materials should be mentioned here since the Government can consider manufacture of the Jawan scooter on a large scale.

Social Priorities

In recent years economic development in India has in practice resulted in considerable low-priority production and conspicuous and wasteful consumption. The consequent dissipation of savings and its effect on the masses in lieu of essential goods and services foregone, are sadly neglected factors. The small car proposal has to be viewed in this light. What is the determining factor,—economic and technical feasibility or social need ?

We have not yet reached self-sufficiency in production of essentials like fertilizers, tractors, special steels. Vital activities such as indigenous development in the field of design, engineering and technology lag behind. When housing for low income groups, better salaries for school teachers, well-equipped schools and hospitals and other essential and high-priority needs have yet to be met, diversion of scarce resources from these to the proposed Rs. 26-crore small car project, -Rs. 25 crore luxury hotel programme etc., makes nonsense of social and national priorities.

There are thus sound reasons why the small car project should be postponed to the Fifth or Sixth Plan and only high-priority projects taken up in the Fourth Plan. For, to put up a factory to make 50,000 cars per year in a developing and poverty-stricken country with a population of 520 millions is neither good economics nor social justice.

An Ombudsman for the University

It is in the nature of things that every system has its own inherent disadvantages. Once we accept this basic truth it is up to us to subject systems to perennial criticism and re-assessment. The autonomy of the University, for instance, must have begun as an admirable concept, designed to keep off an interfering bureaucracy. It was designed, too, to uphold the dignity of a profession whose content was learning and not power.

But over the years the grossest kind of vested interests have grown around this subtle concept of freedom. The teaching jobs in Universities and constituent colleges are more or less on par with senior administrative jobs. But we know how thorough is the process of selection to, say, the Indian Administrative Service. The University jobs are filled in by a rather shoddy mechanism of selection. The Department Head, if the job is in the University proper, virtually decides the candidate. If it is a constituent college, the Chairman of the Governing Body, which is an academic euphemism for the proprietor, decides it.

In the case of the Department Head determining the selection of department personnel, it might be argued that such *ad hoc* methods contribute to a kind of intimate efficiency. In the best Universities abroad, the Professor is given even greater liberties. And certainly, over

there, the system seems to be working fairly well. What is it that makes it rough going in the Indian Universities? Recently, there was considerable discontent over the alleged arbitrariness on the part of the Head of a certain Language department in the Delhi University. It was charged that this gentleman was engaging himself in elaborate coterie-building. It was alleged, too, that even the field of research was suborned to this end of creating recipients of favour. The agitation that broke out for the remedial of this specific departmental grievances was lost in the larger agitations rocking the campus.

But the question remains: If a department goes wrong, what is the mechanism by which it can be brought back to correct norms of functioning? There are certain non-technical subjects, for instance where the results of research cannot be cross-checked with external authority. In such departments, the Department Head would be the ultimate, and if he chose, the arbitrary authority. And if one such individual decides to exploit his unique position for unseemly ends, what is the means by which he can be corrected?

At present, there exists no method. A scholar who stands up to bring a charge against his chief might well have to face the wrath of the Establishment. And he might have to do it in helpless isolation. It is even more serious where women candidates are con-

cerned. Once in a while one comes across a lady who persistently fails to get into service because the head of the department considers her unsuitable to teach or to do research, even though she might have fared extremely well in her qualifying examinations. Perverse interviewers could floor a candidate always, and claim that their personal assessment was more accurate than the chance result of a written examination. This is not an entirely untenable argument either. Because in the absence of a counter-balancing tutorial system, a Master's Degree, taken on the strength of, say, ten or twelve written papers, can be seriously chance-dominated. But the personal assessment could well lead to the other extreme of arbitrary and even whimsical decisions by the expert. It could also, more seriously, be a cover for mala fide decisions and a good deal of corruption.

Women candidates are particularly vulnerable before an unscrupulous Chief. Hence, closed in coterie, over the years, get terribly miasmic. The way out would be to have an ombudsman for the University. Should an aggrieved party need to denounce her chief on grounds of coercion and moral turpitude, a protected and extra-legal sanctum has to be provided for her, where, while justice would be done, her precious privacy also could be maintained. In the absence of such protection, our society being what it is, it will be literally impossible for any aggrieved person to come forward with evidence.

All round there is a false attribution of sanctity to any university, and it would hurt the University type to be told that there could exist such violation of personal morality in the faculties. While privately every one is afraid of Virginia Wolfe, and recognises the hopelessness of the situation, talking about non-existent values like they do at every Convocation hardly helps to impart substance to those values. It is much better to take on the pettiness and the moral squalor than to escape them by mere wordiness and pretence. Such escape only makes the situation even more irredeemable.

—Nalanda

Pups, Parrots and Politics

AYUB SYED

FIROZ KHAN NOON had the best of schooling first at Lahore's Aitchison College and then at Oxford's Wadham. Until 1927 he was an advocate at the Lahore High Court. Then the British enticed him into serious politics, in the tradition of the affluent Noons. Though he had entered the Punjab Assembly as early as 1920, he had been too aristocratic to think of toiling as a Minister under the severe eyes of British Governors. Finally he yielded to temptation and was made Minister for Local Self-Government, and later given the Education portfolio. In 1936 his loyalty to the Raj was duly rewarded when the Viceroy named him the first non-white Indian High Commissioner to Great Britain. On his return in 1941 he was absorbed as Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, the dream of every well-connected toady, entrusted first with the Labour and then the Defence Portfolio. Dining and wining with the high and mighty of the Raj, he could get anything for the asking. He was picked up as Indian representative to the British War Cabinet. The final honour by the Raj was membership of the Indian delegation to the first United Nations conference at San Francisco in 1945.

Our pliable author had much more in store for him. He was a member of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly for nearly ten years, Governor of East Pakistan for three years, Chief Minister of

Punjab for two years. He became Foreign Minister in 1956 and two years later Prime Minister with a bundle of impressive portfolios on his shoulders, including Foreign Affairs, Commonwealth Relations, State and Frontier Regions and Kashmir Affairs.

Then, one dark October night in 1958, there was an ominous knock at his door.

He looked at the watch. It was exactly 11. The young and handsome ADC of President Iskander Mirza thrust a letter into his hands. Noon asked him to wait in case an answer was needed. Briskly stepping out the ADC replied: "Sir, there won't be an answer." The envelope carried the dismissal order. Crest fallen, he picked up the telephone and gave the news to his wife in Lahore. The next morning, the first thing that occurred to him was to write a book. It took him eight years to accomplish the job.

Iskander Mirza's letter is the only official paper he has quoted in full because of its "documentary value". It deserves to be reproduced here in full. It said:

My dear Sir Firoz,

After very careful searching of the heart I have come to the conclusion that the country cannot be sound unless I take full responsibility and take over the administration. The Constitution of the 3rd March, 1956, is not only unworkable but dangerous to the integrity and solidarity of Pakistan. If we go on trying to work it we will have to say good-bye to Pakistan.

"As head of the State, therefore, I have decided to abrogate the Constitution, take over all

powers, dissolve the Assemblies, Parliament and the Central and Provincial Cabinets. My only regret is that this drastic revolutionary action I have had to take while you were the Prime Minister. By the time you get this letter Martial Law will come into operation, and General Ayub, whom I have appointed as the Chief Martial Law Administrator, will be in position.

"For you personally I have great regard and will do all that is necessary for your personnel happiness and well-being".

Submitting to the inevitable, Noon remarked to his 'admirers': It was too great a burden. I did not wish to be Prime Minister. At last I got time to think and write.

From Memory is a jumble of anecdotes strung together with no effort at cogency. He begins: "I was born at village Hamoka on May 7th, 1893, at 4 a.m." Then follows the history of the village and its social life in the early 20th century. "By race we are Bhatti Rajputs and were Hindus of Rajputana" and migrated to Punjab five hundred years ago. Nurpur Noon was the village to which his ancestors later migrated. The rivalry between his family and that of the Tiwana clan is described in detail. Noon's grandfather went to Mecca in 1875 with an intention of being buried there. This made the Tiwana clan chief Malik Sikander Khan jealous. He called at his "able and handsome" sons to take him to Mecca, kill him and bury him there. They asked for the reason. "Whenever anything good is about to happen to this country," Tiwana said, "Malik Fateh Khan Noon, who

From Memory by Firoz Khan Noon (Printers, Publishers and Booksellers, Lahore 1968, pp. 304, Rs. 15).

is buried in Mecca, rises from the dead and with folded hands asks favours from the Almighty for his descendants. When he does so in the future, I, as a rival, will also beseech the Almighty to grant the same favour to my descendants".

Noon passes on to the village mosque and its Qadi who claimed supernatural powers. "I remember one day, a man was carried on a cot to the Qadi. This man was said to have been bitten by a rabid dog. Qadi Saheb made the hurt man's relations knead some flour and we heard that if out of it came dog's hair of the same colour as that of the dog which had bitten the man, then he was sure to be cured; lo and behold! a grey hair did come of it. The man was taken away and lived". Follows a long discourse on dogs and rabbies, and Noon refers to a Briton's experience. "I remember in the Kulu Valley in the Kangra District, which is now in India, there was a superstition among the Hindu farmers that if you collect all the Brahmins and make them stand in the sun all day long, rain will come. Mr. Emerson, who was a revenue officer, recorded in one of his reports that on one occasion the Brahmins were made to stand in the sun all day long to pray for rain. But rain did not come. They were made to stand together the next day and, lo and behold! rain did come!"

From mosque to opium: "Opium is eaten quite a lot in our village.....I have myself eaten opium once in 1944. I was part-ridge shooting near Delhi with my friend Baba Hardit Singh. When we started the afternoon beat he called his servant, who handed him a glass of water and a small pill. He persuaded me to have one also. I never shot better in my life and ended the day as fresh as I had started."

From partridges to parrots. Grandfather of Mecca fame had a fruit orchard and parrots ate away the choicest fruits. He found it difficult to shoot a flying parrot "as it is a small and very fast bird." His advice: "You can shoot them sometimes sitting but once they perch on a green tree, it is difficult

to spot them." His wish is that some one should make small-bore shot-guns with small and cheap cartridges capable of killing no more than one parrot a time". Back to dogs: "Dogs are a great nuisance in the village. They are almost ownerless dogs and breed without any control. Nobody kills a puppy or a dog. My wife had 90 stray dogs killed a year ago. Their places were immediately taken by other dogs from neighbouring villages.....During the War, when I was Defence Minister in Delhi, it was reported that the dog sausage factory in Burma had closed down because the dogs were finished. They were exporting the sausages to China." Suggestion: "I wish somebody would put up a dog factory in Pakistan, and earn some foreign exchange."

Noon occasionally turns poetic. During a discourse on matrimony: "Marriages are still arranged. Some of the girls in villages are very beautiful. A fair skin is considered desirable. People say such and such a girl is so ravishingly beautiful that she must have been brought up on honey and milk, away from the heat of the sun, under the constant and cool glow of the moon of the fourteenth night." In Simla at the age of 15 he would look at the pretty village girls who wore turbans. Uncle Nawab Mubariz Khan would reproach him: "Why do you look on strange women? Keep your eyes down on the ground." And he followed the advice "throughout my life."

After graduation Noon sailed to London in 1912. At Wadham, Suhrawardy and Dewan Chaman Lal were his contemporaries, but he did not get to know them well. Father had advised him not to mix with Indian students and "I am sorry I took him at his word." He moved with the upper crust of white society and was made an honorary Fellow at Wadham. He turned down a Civil Service offer and came back to Sargodha to join the Bar. The game of politics was preferred to promote personal interests.

In between anecdotes he opines: "Elections are a great institution in this country. There are

many kinds of elections.....The urge for national freedom had never existed in this country until our people went to British universities and began to read the speeches of Burke and Fox." The "Hindu Panchayat" system of yore was an archaic institution but "we Muslims are proud of what we sometimes describe as Islamic democracy and we claim that the equality of man is emphasised in the Holy Quran. It is said in the Holy Quran that God has created all human beings from Adam and Eve but in various classes so that the work of society may be facilitated. Sir Mohammed Iqbal, our great philosopher-poet, has wisely said that the brains of two hundred donkeys do not equal the brain of one man."

Then he goes on to pronounce: "It may be due to this history that the British type of democracy cannot flourish in Muslim countries...A country gets the Government it deserves. The Qaid-i-Azam is alleged to have remarked that the Pakistani Muslims secured their freedom far too easily...The main burden of this political struggle was borne by the Hindus. This was natural because they were three-fourths of the population." Paying tribute to Jinnah's one-man leadership he reveals: "That is why, probably, the Qaid-i-Azam is alleged to have said to a Muslim deputation, who recalled their struggle and sacrifice in securing Pakistan. 'Non-sense, I won Pakistan for you with the help of my secretary and his typewriter.'"

Noon adheres to his earlier opinion that the biggest contribution made to Indian democracy was by Sir Fazli Hussain when he founded the Unionist Party in collaboration with Sir Chhotu Ram in 1927. The party ruled Punjab until Partition. Noon is an ardent believer in dreams and each of his ministerial appointments followed a dream the night before. One such dream he had in 1936: "I had dreamt that I was following hounds on my sorrel hunter, a very powerful and beautiful animal. My horse got mixed up with the hounds, a great mistake in hunting, and fell into a quagmire ten feet by

ten feet. But urged him with my voice and he struggled out of the quagmire." In the morning Noon received the appointment order from Punjab Governor Sir Malcolm Hailey.

Noon remembers to have felt offended at the Governor's dinner when Lady X asked, "What are you?" "I am a Minister." She sat up and asked, "What Church?" In Delhi Lady Halifax insulted him: "After the lunch she walked arm in arm with me and suddenly pulled the carnation out of my coat lapel and said: 'Did you not know that I don't like flowers on men's coats?'"

Off to England in 1936 as High Commissioner. Noon was given the 'unique' honour of leading the procession of the Dominion High Commissioners at the Coronation of King George VI at Westminster Abbey. During the war bombs fell in the courtyard of his house but he was sure God would protect him. While London was being heavily bombed people got panicky and began to withdraw their money from the banks. "I did not draw a penny from my bank because somehow or the other I had full faith that there was a God and he could not allow the cruel Nazis to win." But faith in God is one thing and worldly pleasures another. At the height of the bombing Noon was passing through Fortum and Mason in Piccadilly. He saw some very expensive fruit. "I searched my pocket and found that I had just money enough to buy it. I said to myself, let me have some pleasure out of this money because how do I know what will happen the next month? One bomb and it is dust into dust." He was still thinking of the fruit when Secretary of State Amery told him to go back to India and join the Viceroy's Cabinet.

When peace was declared in Europe in 1945 he was selected by Lord Wavell to go to the world conference at San Francisco to represent India. His companion was Sir A Ramaswami Mudaliar. On the way they stopped at Toronto in a hotel where New Zealand Premier Nash was also

staying. "I came back late at night and the hall porter gave me the wrong key. I went in and found Mr. Nash all alone, reading a book. Luckily his wife was not with him, else I would have been more embarrassed than ever. That taught me to always take my key away from the board before retiring."

He recalls how he changed the spelling of his name. He used to spell it NUN but people used to "pronounce it like nun—a woman who has taken holy orders—so I changed the spelling to Noon."

He resigned from the Viceroy's Cabinet in 1945 to enter Punjab politics and fight the elections in order to eliminate the influence of cousin and Chief Minister Sir Khizar Hayat Tiwana, an old rival. He began to hobnob with Jinnah because a vote for the Muslim League meant a vote for Pakistan while his Unionist Party led by Tiwana merely helped the "Hindu Congress."

After Partition Noon was a rolling stone gathering no moss. Suddenly in 1950 Liaqat Ali Khan asked him to take over Governorship of East Pakistan and off he went to Dacca—"my wife and I, with our two dogs and personal staff." By this time he had developed liking for dogs thanks to his European wife. Sunderbans fascinated him. He often went hunting tigers and crocodiles. While East Bengal was seething with unrest against Liaqat's policies, Noon found enough time to mix with Sunderban elephants. "You would be amazed how easily the elephant's skin is broken and can be made to bleed. After sundown some of us sat round the log fire, under the open skies, for a long time. At night we slept in ramshackle huts, and with the sound of an occasional tiger roaring in the neighbourhood I did not enjoy my sleep." He complains that his advice from Dacca fell on deaf ears in Karachi. He insisted in his dispatches: "It is difficult to administer East Pakistan from Karachi... that which turns tigers into jackals is poverty, poverty, poverty" (translation of a famous Persian proverb). Liaqat's successor Khwaja Nazimuddin

recalled him and made him Chief Minister of Punjab.

Governor-General Ghulam Mohammed in a bid to assume absolute power dissolved the Constituent Assembly, dismissed Premier Nazimuddin and the Noon Ministry in Punjab "in the public interest". With Khan Sahib, Noon founded the Republican Party "encouraged and inspired by Iskander Mirza". There was a quick succession of Prime Ministers and when Awami League leader Shaheed Suhrawardy became Prime Minister he included Noon in the cabinet as Foreign Minister.

He reserves unqualified admiration for John Foster Dulles. "The more I knew Mr. Dulles, the greater grew my respect for him. He has been a much maligned man but I think, in retrospect, many a man will agree with me when I call him brave and just and utterly sincere. Pakistan has certainly had no better American friend since Mr. Dulles went."

His role as Prime Minister is recent history. He grew into a large-hearted man, came to Delhi and signed the almost forgotten Nehru-Noon Pact. Perhaps overtaken by emotions he praised Nehru as "a great servant of the people of India, second only to Gandhi. It is a great mistake to judge other people's heroes from one's own standard... The Hindus did not like our Qaid-i-Azam, the Pakistan Muslims do not like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. It is the same all over the world."

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The Ten Thousand

BACK in Delhi we decided on a review of the Jalpaiguri Summit. For, at Jalpaiguri we had decided to declare floods indecent.

'This,' said she, 'is an extreme measure. Nothing short of it is going to stop them.'

'Whom?' asked Charvaka.

'The rivers,' said she.

'The Chinese drove iron piles,' said an engineer. 'And so when the Yellow River was in spate again...'

She flushed for a moment, and, 'Who are you?' she asked.

'I'm an engineer,' said the man.

'Are you not unemployed?' she demanded.

'Unfortunately, no, said the man, and he sounded terribly guilty. 'I do happen to be working.'

'You ought to be ashamed of yourselves,' said she, 'remaining smugly in employment when scores of your brother engineers prefer to be unemployed to help ward off the Chinese and the Pakistani menaces.'

'Ma'am,' said Charvaka, 'you left out the Ceylonese menace in Kachchathivu.'

'Add that up too,' said she to the engineer, who in confusion and panic scribbled down the Ceylonese threat in a notebook.

'Look!' said the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, coming over to where the engineer sat, and talking encouragingly, 'I'm one with the unemployed engineers, the really unemployed ones (not the pretenders) who are the Works Ministry. I've taken a pledge, and got myself photographed for the *Statesman* second from the right and first from down under,

that every day for half an hour I will miss being an employed engineer.' Every day.'

'Did any other papers carry that photograph, sir?' asked Charvaka.

'No,' said the Parliamentary Affairs Minister. 'You know how it is with the monopoly press. I'm all for fighting the monopolies.'

'So am I,' said she.

'Oh, you,' said the Minister. 'You're at the top. If you say the monopolies have to go, they will have to, and so you can't afford to say that. It's different with us.'

She turned to him in gentle admonition. There was too much talking and getting off track.

'Boys,' said Charvaka, 'let's get back to the main question. The loss of the Olympic hockey trophy.'

'Yes,' said she, 'and I've said why, already. It was because we lost single-mindedness and purpose, and of course patriotism, that we lost it. And Jalpaiguri only strengthens me in this belief. Could you imagine, ten thousand people not giving any proper account of themselves when the nation needed them most?'

Dharma Vira, who sat nearby to be handy, said too, 'It was scandalous behaviour. There ought to be an ordinance which makes it criminal for anybody to get lost in a flood with just four months to go for the mid-term polls.'

'And probably,' said she, 'we can ask Chandrasekhar to provide everyone with a helicopter to fly over the waters when the floods come. Helicopters were an old

birth control gimmick of his anyway.'

'The departments of birth control and flood control,' suggested Charvaka, 'ought to be merged.'

'That won't stop the floods,' she said, 'nor bring us back the Olympic hockey trophy.'

'May be,' ventured Charvaka, 'we ought to try and get the national anthem adapted not merely to group dances but also to Kathakali.'

No one listened. The Parliamentary Affairs Minister said, 'The way of socialism is not that, not right now anyway. I've shown the way.'

'I knew you would,' said she. 'Now tell us, what it is.'

'I've taken a pledge, signed it actually,' said he, 'not to touch water for two minutes every day, and to keep all taps closed.'

'God!' said Charvaka. 'It's great. It's like remembering Gandhiji.'

'If only all people were like him,' said she, 'and signed such pledges, there wouldn't be any floods and we wouldn't have lost the Olympic trophy. But certainly, two minute every day is a strain.'

'Easy, ma'am,' said the Minister, 'there's a simultaneous drought on in Rajasthan. For that I get extra wet those two minutes. It sort of cancels out.'

'Boys,' said she, 'whatever trophy we might lose, we shall remain wholly and truly non-aligned.'

The ten thousand people lost in the flood felt ashamed and guilty.

—Charvaka

(Continued from page 16)

Such an argument coming from apologists of monopolists, big businessmen, over paid Secretaries of the Government of India and Ministers is really astonishing. We have never heard these gentlemen proposing a cut in their super profits, or fat salaries and perquisites, allowances and other avenues of gains because millions of their countrymen are living below starvation level. But they are not ashamed to trot this out when the real producers of all, wealth the workers in mines and factories, in shipyards and railways, in plantations and offices, want their wages to be brought at least to a level which will just take care of their minimum requirements as agreed upon at a tripartite meeting. Then they try to put one section of semi-starved producers against another section of semi-starved producers, using each against the other in an effort to deny better conditions to both.

Universal Applicability

There is no doubt that millions of agricultural workers live and work in sub-human conditions. Their conditions must be improved. To do this it is necessary to undertake land reforms in the interest of the actual tillers; to control prices; to nationalise banks and to break the octopus grip of the monopolies on our economy. The gentlemen of the bourgeoisie refuse to do this; all that they want to do is to keep all toilers below the subsistence level so long as their profits keep mounting.

The concept of the need-based minimum wage is of universal applicability. But today the demand is raised only in respect of organised industries and organised services. In these sectors, it is possible of achievement and is necessary for any human advance. The extension of the norms to other sectors will also come, but later on. Advance where possible cannot be denied in the name of sharing poverty. Let us first share the profits and plug the sources of super-profits. Let us simultaneously take steps

to increase the wealth. In the organised sector, however, the slogan of the need-based minimum wage would merely lead to a redistribution of the wealth already created in the interests of the toilers and hence it can be done right away.

An argument which is frequently advanced is that there is no capacity to pay wages at such a level. The Supreme Court of India has repeatedly held that an industry which cannot pay even the minimum wage should be closed down rather than allowed to run on sweated labour.

But apart from this, let us examine the argument a little more closely. First of all, it is a matter of fixing priorities. If this is done properly, if, for instance, the car loans advanced to bureaucrats are given a lower priority than money to buy milk or medicine for the wife and child of a Class IV employee, plenty of ill-spent money can be saved. There are many such priorities fixed by the top bureaucrats, the multi-millionaires and the bosses in favour of their own selves and those belonging to their class.

Secondly, profits can be scaled down.

Thirdly, urgent structural economic reforms can be undertaken which will give all-round benefit.

Lastly, prices should be pegged. If this is done, the D.A. will not rise and the resources which are found periodically for raising D.A. every now and then could be utilised instead towards a need-based minimum.

Class Policy

No, it is not a question of resources nor of capacity. It is a question of the economic policies pursued by a class state in the interests of the bourgeoisie and against that of the workers. That is the plain truth of the matter which cannot be hidden behind learned verbiage or empty moral platitudes nor even behind sham political slogans.

Take, for instance, yet another argument that every increase in wages or D.A. pushes the prices still further up and adds to the inflationary spiral. This

learned argument cannot be substantiated by a single fact. Prices always run ahead of wages, every single D.A. increase comes after price index has already risen; in many cases, adjustments come only after a minimum threshold rise in index and after a minimum qualifying period. Facts thus belie the arguments, but learned apologists have little to do with facts which do not suit the interests of the class which they themselves serve.

The causes of inflation do not lie in the increase in nominal wages or D.A. This is not even a contributory factor. The causes lie in the growing grip of monopoly on our economy; in the quest for more and more super-profits, in the sharing of the loot by those in power; in their refusal to undertake measures which will increase production and ensure equitable distribution of the produce. The causes of inflation lie in the self-same class policies which lead to the denial of a human wage for a human being.

In conclusion, we then have to note: The concept of a need-based minimum is of universal applicability. It is realisable in all organised sectors of industry and service. It is a slogan which will help in re-distributing to some extent, the wealth already created, in the interests of the actual workers who produce it. Once it is agreed to fix wages on this basis, its quantification in money terms at any given level of prices is only a mathematical exercise. To guard the equation between nominal and real wages, full neutralisation of every price variation must be guaranteed.

The need-based minimum wage is, therefore, a demand of utmost importance and urgency; and all trade unions must unite to fight for its realisation in the organised sectors of industries and services.

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The Future that Worked

GOPAL HALDAR

'I have seen the future : It works', so said the American Lincoln Steffens who was present in Russia during the early days of the Soviet Union. It was not given to us in India to have the same experience. Yet, we felt we were being ushered into that Future, even while our yesterdays appeared to hold us back from the present that lay about. We were like birds waiting for the dawn, ever since 1905, the Swadeshi days in Bengal ; and our very wings tingled in expectation while that dawn broke over Central Asia after 1917.

Father's World : Early Nature

I was but a child, between three to five years of age, when the Swadeshi raged in its first fury in Bengal (1905-07), and, the image of the Swadeshi that I came to form in that East Bengal town (Noakhali) was one of a national awakening distorted by the imperialist repression into secret conspiracies and violence. It was a force in hiding and challenged the foreign power through sporadic acts of startling outrages and youthful self-sacrifice ; and created in that way a widening circle of admiration for revolutionary daring and patriotism, and instilled self-respect and self-confidence among the people : 'We will not yield'.

The family I was born into, an educated Bhadralog joint family of uncles and aunts, of cousins and other relations, was middle middle class without any vested interest, liberal in outlook. They were patriotic in general but genial and rational and balanced in their views. By temperament they were averse to outrages and, at the same time, as intelligent men, doubtful of the moderates, 'begging politics'. The bamboo-wall of our baithak-khana (the sitting room) was hung with printed copies of the portraits of more than half-a-dozen of our 19th century forebears, of Ram Mohan Roy, Madhusudan Dutt, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and others and, a special sheet in art-paper of the *Bengalee* (edited by Surendra Nath Banerji) from another side of the wall, familiarized with the portraits of the Congress Presidents from W.C. Bonnerjee to Rash Behari Ghosh (the latest of them, who presided at Surat in 1908). We were born, as it were, to live with them, and under their eyes. Tilak, Aurobindo, Bipin Pal and Lajpat Roy should be there, but our elders knew that that would be 'indiscreet' and even risky.

The evenings at that lawyer's 'baithak-khana' were enlivened with the *adda* or gatherings and talks of my father's friends, some five or six of them, men of liberal education and profession, would gather at that informal club of the Bengalis, and besides law and the local happenings, news of the day and cultural items of the times would come up for free and lively talks. Their views were frank and laughter loud and infectious. Scraps of these reached us, the youngsters at the other fringe of the 'baithak-khana'. Like many other things, we had our tastes and interests in politics and culture shaped by these without anybody's knowing it, we ourselves or our elders. There we were introduced to 'Surendra Nath Banerji's spirit,—which earned him the sobriquet 'surrender not'—heard bits of his thundering oratory, and other national political anecdotes and the controversy that raged between Lord Curzon on the one hand and R.C. Dutt and G.K. Gokhale on the other. The golden days of oratory were not yet over and quotations from Burke, Sheridan and Fox's, eloquent impeachment of Warren Hastings warmed us up as also those of Gladstone and John Bright and Asquith of the later times. Shakespeare and Milton were quoted as freely as Kalidass and Madhusudan, and we were thrilled to hear my father declaim frequently : 'Fallen cherub', to be weak is miserable...Better to reign in Hell than to serve in Heaven'. Literature added its sustaining power to patriot's holy flame ; it sent a warm glow through our young hearts.

Here I first learn of Prafulla Chaki's self-immolation following the Muzaffarpur Bomb outrage (1908) and, it touched our elder's hearts. I had my first introduction to the swadeshi spirit on that summer afternoon as I heard them talk of it. Incidents and outrages multiplied. Our Bengali weekly catered them to our houses ; I picked the crumbs avidly from the mother's aunt's dishes ; and they also soon came to favour me with the more wholesale fare of the *Prabasi* of Sri Ramananda Chatterji which was largely a Bengali replica of the '*Modern Review*' and at the same time the accepted forum of Tagore's literary creations and thoughts.

We came to look beyond our frontiers also. The victory of Japan over Russia (1904) had been welcome to all Asia, as we knew, and the Bengali of the Swadeshi days hailed Japan almost as India's future liberator. Kaliprasanna Kavyavisarad, a prominent nationalist journalist, sailed for Japan with the idea

of winning Japan's support for India's fight for freedom. On his way back a year later he died on board the vessel—and was given a sea-burial. But Karvyavisarad was said to have left a message for his countrymen to this purpose: "Japan is no friend of India." This we heard quoted in our Baithak-khana, with the observation that Japan would at the proper hour oust Britain out of the East but only to grab the spoils including India. Japan was no friend; but she had shown how hollow was Russia. For, the Czarist rule, as all despotic rulers, thoroughly demoralised nations and countries, and the 'Russian bear' was no longer any threat to the 'British lion' in India as in the 19th century. But then, the Germans had crushed in a three-weeks war the French of Napoleonic glory and, the Kaiser had since then been preparing for an armageddon. Such were my introductions to international affairs, when I was a lad of only 10 or 11 as yet. The War in Tripoli and then the Balkan War made the Baithak-khana warm up more and more.

So, when the First World War (August 4, 1914) broke upon them and me, my ideas of the national and international politics had come by certain positive strands: (1) My literary enthusiasm and patriotic zeal had somehow got intertwined into one, and the two were but two-sides of necessary endeavours for national self-expression. For the Tilak summed it into one declaration: 'Swaraj is my birth right'.

(2) Let the 'Moderates' pursue the polite way of politics, I thought, the Extremists, the rough way of it; but liberty, we should know; had to be paid for with blood and tears. The lovers of liberty will have to pay that price.

(3) The sun must set on the British empire; but Japan or Germany will be of no help to us.

(4) The Czarist, the Turk, the Hapsburg empires were doomed to decay because of despotism and only their younger men with democratic ideas could save these people from ruin.

(5) Enslavement of people must end as despotic rule everywhere be replaced by democracy—a vague feeling like this was grown into a strong belief with us brought up in such liberal or nationalist homes of Bengal as the First World War broke out in 1914.

The War Unleashes Forces

The War (1914-18) let loose unforeseen forces. The October Revolution (Nov. 7, 1917) was one year old by the time the War ended. Very naturally our intelligentsia knew that Britain's defeat would open up our chance of victory; at any rate her difficulty was our opportunity.

Under the facade of co-operation, the moderates, who thought it was 'a war somehow to make Democracy safe' prayed for self-Government as a good-conduct prize. The Extremists with Tilak and Annie Besant at their head pressed in evident imitation of Ireland, for Home Rule for India. However the two may act, the Swadeshi or Revolutionary, nationalists knew it was the hour to strike their blow for national freedom; now or never—foreign

aids in the shape of arms were to be procured; the Indian army won over against the rulers, and, revolutionary secret societies must expand among the inflammable youths of education and character. The secret revolutionary societies pushed on their work feverishly quickly among the students, particularly in East Bengal with the outbreak of the war.

The War also offered them the opportunities for it. The people at large had grown immediately news-minded, though they knew that the news catered through the British sources like the Reuter were 75 per cent undependable. Even young lads like us took to reading the *Statesman* and the *Englishman*, and later the *Bengalee* and the *Patrika* when these opened their circulation agencies in our little town. Bengali dailies were really born about the time to answer the popular demand and the weeklies increased their circulation by thousands. One would read out a daily or weekly, and a score of literate and illiterate artisans and workmen sit around to learn the latest news, and then, in their own way, to draw their conclusions. People were politicalised, young or old.

Quests and Questions

A revolutionary society (Jugantara) drew us in, even as I stepped into teens. The hour was about to strike. We continued all in tension. But after Jatin Mukherjee's death in the Balasore fight with the police, we came to know that the arms plot had failed. Still we waited, all was not lost. By the end of 1916, the Defence of India Act swept away practically the entire leadership and the important cadres of the revolutionary societies from the field, and some four and half thousand of them were in prisons and village detention in Bengal. We fed ourselves with stories of daring incidents and reports of revolutionary activities in India and abroad. But that was not enough. It led us to examine our own position and feel that isolated efforts, however, heroic, could not lead to the guerrilla war, much less to revolution. The people and their participation were particularly the basic condition for that in a people disarmed and also out of touch with their own armed men. The basic task for the Freedom fight was to create that consciousness among the people.

Militant nationalism had been led into activities in pursuance of Swami Vivekananda's message of service to the *Daridra Narayan*, ('God the Have-not'). Revolutionary societies in Bengal had accordingly since 1908-1919 run relief works in flood and drought and in the distress of the people; they ran gymnasia, nursing bodies and reading rooms, libraries; and sought to make the people by such service, their own kith and kin. That was necessary work, the revolutionaries recognised, but Freedom's Battle was different; it was to be fought by the soldiers of the nation, and revolutionary cadres of youths alone could have the training and high idealism for the purpose. Necessarily, the battle at least in the beginning was to be raised by that small force of youths limited by the needs of the secret societies to isolation and underground activities. But the end of

1916 some of us felt the secret societies were a blind alley—the basic task was work among the people and that would not be bypassed or postponed.

At least, one or two in our little grooves came to this belief through our readings of Tagore, his poetry, novel and the political and social essays. We even came to feel that true patriotism upholds as the Poet said, the principle that love of one's own people should embrace the love of all other peoples and love of all peoples should base itself on the love of one's own. Of course, the lectures of 'Nationalism' (delivered in 1916) made us later see more clearly the predatory character of nationalism. But in 1917-18 we were still youthful Nationalists, who persuaded ourselves that the 'basic task' laid down only the base, while the Revolution had to complete it. How to effect the Revolution—Revolution in India—that was the question.

First Thrills

Our revolutionary nationalism had reached this point when in February-March, 1917, there burst upon us the news of the Revolution in Russia and the fall of Czarism. The same old Baithak-khana was all happy. The worst of despotism is gone and one more democracy is born. We were delighted—a Republic in Russia. The situation was not, beyond that, easy for us to grasp. What did we know of Russia? It was the heart of despotism and it was as against that, the land of Nihilist outrages, of Tolstoyan passive resistance, and of Kropotkin's anarchism. And now in 1917 it was a Republic to be led on the side of the British by democratic politicians and conservative generals and aristocrats. Soldiers and workers led by socialist leaders were not satisfied with these rulers either and demanded socialism.

'Socialism' was not altogether a new word to us in Bengal. As early as 1872, Bankim Chandra had discussed the socialism of the First International in his well-known essay on *Samya*. But there was no mention of Marx or Engels, nor of their doctrine in that essay which discussed so competently different varieties of revolutionary social philosophy. In the last decade of the 19th century, Tagore had observed the rise of the socialists in England with sympathy; and Vivekananda, who met some, even declared that the Vaisya rule (rule of the bourgeoisie) must give way to the rule of the Sudras (the Have-nots, and proletariat). Keir Hardy and Ramsay MacDonald were two 20th-century socialists who had certain appeals for the educated Indians of those days. But none of us, in India, had heard of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, nor, it appears of Marx and Engels. But as the Bolsheviks in Russia captured the Winter Palace, they came to be known; and, so in clumsy and dubious ways, their actions and doctrines were referred to in news dispatches as extreme socialists who like the 'Levellers' of old, were enemy of all private property and social inequality. Was it so? Trying to do what Buddha and Christ would endorse? We were stirred to our very souls at their audacity and welcomed their revolutionary measures, all the

more since the imperialists, one and all, appeared to see in the Bolshevik Revolution the biggest threat to their own domination.

But parties and powers are not known to be particularly too eager to carry into practice proclamations and doctrines they profess when out of power. Amazement seized us, as it seized all subject peoples, when it became evident that the Bolsheviks had not only cancelled all unequal treaties and given all the nationalities in the Czarist empire the right to self-determination, but that even the Asiatic peoples of Bokhara and Samarkand, the Trucks, the Tajiks, the Kazaks, the Georgrains, the Armenians, all the subject peoples of the Russians, had leapt into freedom along with Poland, Finland and other White peoples.

History has never before seen such a day and socialism marks out a new epoch in history. No single act could have established the *bona fides* of the Bolsheviks and their leader Lenin, before the down-trodden peoples of the world as much as the liberation of all peoples of Asia. It was no eyewash then, this Bolshevik pledge, we concluded, we would trust them to fulfill each of it. (1) Land to the peasants in Russia (2) public ownership of the means of production, industries and establishments; (3) immediate end of war without loss or gain or compensation. In short, end of exploitation of man by man and of nation by nation.

No amount of imperialist warning against Bolshevik menace and horror, and of Lenin's cruelty and crimes, would now weigh with us Indians generally; and it never did when we came to know more of the tremendous socialist venture—like liquidation of illiteracy and feeding of the starving millions. Barely eight months after the Revolution, Tagore in the pages of the *Modern Review* (July, 1918) cautioned us against accepting what was being said by the great powers to run down the Russian Revolution and he ended with a characteristic declaration to the sense—Were the great endeavour of the Revolutionaries to fail, its memory would shine as a morning star of promise for a new dawn.

The poet spoke for us all of India.

Search for the Key

Of course, even our best informed men had little supplies of information in those years 1917-1918, and a youth of 15 and 16 as I was then I had still less opportunities to reach the resources and capacity to form a judgment. Only the feelings and the political sense stood by me. I was too young to read the *Modern Review* which became my steady source for many purposes from about the last quarter of 1919; otherwise, in 1918 I could profit by the *Review* frequently and informative extracts from foreign press and the editor's own comments on the commendable measure of the Bolsheviks in popular education and reconstruction. So, before that time, the last quarter of 1919, I could have no steady access to the ideas and activities of the Bolsheviks.

What were they, and the real meaning of the words "Bolshevik" and "Bolshevism", that we read

without number? I asked my elders, some of them were the rising intellectuals of the day, and I found they knew nothing more than what they (and I) gathered from the daily press: a body of extreme socialists ("Maximalists") of Russia. Personally I took to Russian literature to have their background. My literary avidity drove me beyond Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Turgenev to Gorky and Chekhov, and it did supply me with the milieu of life in which the Revolution in due course developed. The foreground also emerged soon enough.

My cousin, one year senior to me, took up Honours studies in Economics in 1919, and an American professor's history of political thought was one of his text-books. I ran through its chapter on socialist thought as soon as the book was purchased. American professor was not kind to socialism, it goes without saying; but his treatment as a text-book writer, was academic, lucid and systematic, and this youngster of 17 owes to him his first introduction to the names and ideas of Marx and Engels and of Lenin and the Bolsheviks along with those of other socialists. That was terrain *firma* in any case, and I found it sometime in July and August 1919; and soon enough, I came to know the meaning of the two puzzling words of Russian origin, 'Bolshevik' and 'Menshevik'. The introduction stood me in good stead when I first came across a small classic of Marxism. India was in ferment, and non-cooperation was in high tide about 1920-21; the educated people were eager about everything, Tolstoyism, Gandhism, Socialism, Anarchism, etc. etc. A copy of the *Communist Manifesto* happened to reach me (1921 or 1922?) like other tracts, and I made my way through the *Manifesto* and made of it what my little studies and political sense allowed me. It was necessarily immature, but nothing foolish as I hold now.

The Spreading Light

But I had got nearer to the core through other approaches which my own political interests and the public affairs of the years of 1919-1922 made available. The Civil War in Russia, the foreign interventionists' war and armed crusade, the Kolchaks and Denikins of the White Reaction; the British military expedition, Iran, Bokhara and Samarkand in Central Asia, all these had their lessons. Indian soldiers of the Punjab and the N. W. Frontier carried back home their experience of the Central Asian expedition and their knowledge of the Bolshevik efforts and attitudes to the suppressed peoples and the stories of all that trickled eastwards into Bengal and Calcutta. The Russian Revolution raised new hopes among the people, rightly observed Montford Report in 1918. At the Calcutta Session of the Congress (1917). Annie Besant in her Presidential address made the first reference from the Congress platform to the significance of the Revolution. The special session in Bombay a few months later that rejected the Montford plan of constitutional reform was dubbed "Bolshevik" by the *Englishman* for its bold utterances. The Rowlatt Bill and the Punjab atrocities (1919) followed and drove the whole of India into a mood

of defiance. So, at the Special Session of the Congress at Calcutta (August, 1920), the Non-Cooperation resolution was carried and the Congress entered the Gandhian era of non-violent direct action (instead of resolutions and petitioning) of being a full time active organisation without being a more annual X'mas gathering, and, lastly, a country-wide national forum with a democratic constitution. Lala Lajpat Rai, who returned from exile to preside over the Special Session of the Congress at Calcutta noted in clear terms the high significance of the Working-class Revolution. He also presided the same year (1920) over the foundation session of the Indian Trade Union Congress and referred to the rôle of the workers in the international as well as in national spheres. These were memorable developments, and struck us young people as remarkable. Public life was no longer timid, and the national platform was drawing to itself all classes and sections who desired national freedom, particularly, the new working class force.

Industrial unrest and strike waves swept over the land between 1919 and 1922 and to us in eastern India, the strike and emigration en masse of the Assam plantation labour, the Chandpur station attack on them, and, the total strike of the workers and employees of the A.B. Rly and river steamship companies in sympathy with the plantation labour were stirring events in 1922. It was nothing less than a general strike, in character. The people stood by the side of the strikers and the national leadership of the Congress in fact were at the head of a movement which was openly anti-imperialist. So for over a month the regime was in collapse in the whole of eastern Bengal and Assam. We should recall that no other struggle, before or after, reached such intensity or extensity in India as that of this Assam and Bengal workers and peoples' joint anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist effort. The workers' movement, it was clear, had forged a living link with the national liberation movement on the basis of anti-imperialism, as Lajpat Rai had hoped for in 1920. For younger people like us who had little direct experience of working class struggle this was of very high significance. It almost opened up a perspective of our national democratic revolution.

Swadeshis at Crossroad

From 1920, we who were used to 'only secret methods of fight for liberation, were also in positive inner turmoil. The shell was broken, and even organisationally we were drawn upon new rails of public movements at the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1920. The Bengal revolutionaries had been released then some months earlier, and they were in a mood of political rethinking. Chitta Ranjan Das was a friend in need for rehabilitation, and won their hearts by his sincere concern for them as also for the country. At the Special Calcutta Session of the Congress and at the Nagpur Annual Session in December, 1920, those of them who did not give up political struggle joined him on both accounts; and decided at his request that though they did not agree with non-violence and non-cooperation of Gandhiji,

they would give it a fair trial and at least for one year work to organise the Congress movement sincerely and wholeheartedly.

That was the year of the first Congress upheaval. The very mass response of it won a few of the revolutionaries away from secret societies and even from militant nationalism. They went heart and soul to work among the people and work for their uplift. A larger section also stuck to the Congress and its movements, though they had reservations about Gandhism and non-violence, and continued also to reorganise (from about 1923) secret revolutionary groups as ancillary to the main movement. A small fraction stood totally off from the Congress and Das, the *Haq Katha* section as 'true revolutionists' and, naturally in opposing the national movement they got themselves rejected by the country. It was a wise decision on the part of the Begal revolutionaries on the whole to be in the Congress and the mainstream; the Congress had just grown into the national democratic organisation though Gandhian leadership imposed on it the methods which were not of revolutionary popular action. But it was the national organisation; even in our small district, for example, it had in its heyday (1921-22) more than 200 branch committees tearing off the very roots of the British power from the villages and the minds of the common people. Personally, I was completely against any secret groupings as of old and the method of sporadic terroristic vanguardism. To me, even Gandhiji's 'non-changer' programme of 'constructive work'—in spite of its rigidity—was more welcome than secret-society activities. The Congress movement made the organisers know the masses; and nothing but mass organisation, the 'basic work', in which I had come to believe as long as 1917—would be of help. Once it was really on, well, I argued, the Russian Revolution showed the way where it would lead if we had the revolutionary vision. 'To the people then', the nameless, anonymous masses, waiting to be led—that was what I conceived to be the slogan of revolutionary nationalism with the Congress as its instrument of the hour.

Many of us did not believe in Gandhism, much as we tried, the intellectuals of Bengal were more sceptical of Gandhiji's non-co-operation programme which desired boycott of schools and colleges, and enjoyed Pramatha Chaudhuri, the most 'unattached' among them, leading his attacks in the *Sabuj Patra* against Gandhism and its programme with wit, and banter and literary art. But when the Congress undertook mass organisation, I thought it deserved our energetic participation and steady loyalty. A youthful evidence of an action of mine has been recently unburied from the pages of the *Sabuj-Patra* (February, 1921). I had written in it, over the name of a friend, a small article urging my views in support of non-co-operation and mass movement and ended the short contribution with observation to the purport: Russia and India are distant to each other outwardly, but close enough to each other essentially. When Tugenev's *Virgin Soil* closes we see its revolutionary hero leaving with the declaration that he

has for his leader now the 'Anonymous Russia'. For us in India, it is now the hour to turn to "Anonymous India".

So starting with Vivekananda and Rabindranath my sojourn had led me as a Revolutionary Nationalist to a stage in which Anonymous India alone loomed clear and unambiguous—a landmark in my Swadeshi Odyssey.

After 1921-22, information about Soviet Revolution became more and more available. Knowledge of theories (and practices) of Bolshevism could be gathered as well. *The Vanguard*, *The Advance Guard*, etc. from abroad reached India across many barriers; in Bengal, *Dhumketu*, *Lungal*, *Atmasakti* and *Bijli*, the weekly sympathetic to the Soviets appeared, and in the pages of our local weekly, *Deshar Vani*, classed with those, I too wielded my youthful pen for what I conceived socialism. The organised workers' movement and the workers and peasants Samity in Bengal grew before our very eyes. Our own townsman Comrade Muzaffar Ahmad, we knew, was the adherent of its political ideology. The Communists also began to join up into a Party in India. Peshawar, Kanpur and later Meerut trials also seemed to focus public attention on the Communist movement and the Soviet Revolution.

The growth of the USSR as a Federation of different nationalities on the basis of nation self-determination and with the right of secession to constituents was a pointer, to me at any rate, for the multinational, multi-lingual India—a concrete realization I hold of the principle of 'Unity and Diversity' which underlies Indian history. And, when the First Five Year Plan broke upon the sceptical world I was one of the first six to snatch a copy of Grinko's volume from the Calcutta Book Company. Man, I felt, was taking his future in his own hand under socialism in the Soviet Union.

So tossed about by a thousand and one event and ideas—depressed sometimes with national political frustration, asphyxiated with the poisonous gas of communalism; at times taking refuge in half-hearted literary and linguistic researches the years between 1922 and 1929 swept me on through the crosscurrents of national and international life, making me, with the inner conflicts and contradictions, look ridiculous and pitiable in my idealism, spasmodically sympathetic to the cause of revolutionary fights and violence—the years drove into me a settled conviction that for us in India the Revolutionary Socialism that I believed in, was to evolve through the intermediate phase of Democratic Revolution, and in that liberation struggle, all classes and political parties of the Indian people had to be united—the Congressmen, the Revolutionaries, the Nationalists and the Communists alike and that none should hold aloof from that United action, neither the Revolutionary Nationalist nor Revolutionary socialist.

And beneath that conviction there was the deepening consciousness that the end of exploitation of man by man and of nation by nation was inevitable after the Russian Revolution of November 7, 1917.

The future had been at work since then.

DMK AND THE LEFT

(Continued from page 12)

united one consisting of dedicated members—although the people of Madras City had enough facts to think differently. But once power was assured for five years, the emergence of personal ambitions as the decisive factor was to be expected. It was to prevent this factor from leading to the disintegration of the party that Sri Annadurai decided to give up his Lok Sabha seat and take up the Chief Ministership. But how long can a party, the majority of whose leaders have little thought for anything but self-aggrandisement, be kept together? This no doubt is the question that must be worrying Sri Annadurai most at the moment.

It has been said that the results of the Madras City civic elections show that the people are disillusioned with the performance of the DMK in Government. If there is disillusionment, who is to blame? The electorate did not have any reason to think at any time that the DMK was any different from the Congress in the composition of its leadership. On the other hand, it was quite obvious that the party did not have any constructive socio-economic programme to implement if it was given power. It was clear that a State could not be administered effectively and purposefully on the basis of anti-Hindi slogans. The DMK was in no position to outline to the people what precisely it would do if it was voted to power, except for last-minute stunts like a measure of rice per rupee. Perhaps the electorate, bitter that the Congress Party had not kept any of its promises once it was voted to office, felt that election promises did not matter one way or the other and that it was enough to demonstrate their disapproval of the Congress. "Congressmen have had it good for 20 years, now let other take their place" appeared to be the essence of the electorate's attitude at the time of the Fourth General Election.

Despite all this, however, expectations ran high once the DMK assumed office and pro-

mises began to be made by its spokesmen. The working class, which largely provided the base of the DMK, imagined that a new era had dawned for it. The enthusiasm even in the ranks of experienced industrial labour in Madras was very noticeable. When some of the top DMK leaders, including those in office, made fantastic promises about rapid improvement in their conditions, these promises were swallowed wholesale. In the event, however, the DMK Ministry has not been able to be even as firm with the employers as the Congress Ministry had been. Strikes have almost invariably resulted in a raw deal for the workers. It seems significant therefore that the DMK should have lost in the civic elections the labour areas and slums which had been considered its strongholds in the past. The Leftist parties leading the trade union movement in the State, despite their political alliance with the DMK, are clearly resentful of the role the ruling party has been playing in respect of industrial disputes. The failure of the State Government to keep its promises to textile labour rendered unemployed by the closure of mills shows how justified this resentment is.

It is not only industrial labour that has reason to feel let down. In the sphere of agricultural relations also the DMK has done little more than keep the programmes initiated by the Congress Party going. A good harvest has helped to soften feelings in the rural areas, but that cannot be for long. The exploited sections in the rural areas, especially those organised by the Leftist parties, have already given several indications of their angry mood. The compulsions of the anti-Congress alliance may keep things from getting out of hand for the time being, but the DMK would be unwise to conclude that it will remain so indefinitely. Its major advantage is that its allies are more anxious to prevent the return of the Congress to power than to ensure good administration. But at least the Leftist section of the alliance is under

pressure from the ranks, and may not be able to give priority to the needs of the alliance for very long.

The DMK has all the weaknesses of the Congress without any of the latter's strong points. These weaknesses include not only factional quarrels and personal ambitions, but even inflated membership. A newspaper correspondent has pointed out that the number of local units and the number of members of the party have doubled in the 18 months of power. The implications are clear enough.

So far as the civic election results are concerned, it may not be very wise to read too much significance into them. Nevertheless, a few points seem to emerge clearly enough. First and foremost, the DMK's estimate of its own strength has been belied; it had set up 96 candidates but only 54 were elected. Secondly, among the alliance partners of the DMK, only the Muslim League has been able to win all the seven seats allotted to it. Swatantra, despite the blessings of Sri Rajagopalachari, has managed to get only three out of seven. Thirdly, it is only because of the alliance partners that the DMK will continue to dominate the civic body. Fourthly, the Congress Party, despite the massive reverse suffered in recent by-elections, has improved its position substantially, winning in several DMK strongholds in the process. While to expect any major change in the quality of the civic administration will obviously be futile, there is no doubt that the effective participation in Corporation affairs of certain of the alliance partners and the presence of an opposition feeling much stronger than before will have their own effect.

So far as the DMK as the ruling party is concerned, the chief lesson it has to draw is that unless it can work out without delay a clear-cut economic programme and begin implementing it, popular discontent with it can only grow, not diminish. There is little to show that it is capable of doing this. On the other hand, all available evidence goes to show

that the Rightist and reactionary elements in the leadership are very much stronger than the Left-inclined section. Organised as it is, it will not be easy for the party's rank and file to assert itself to the extent of bringing about a qualitative change in the composition of the leadership.

It is time, therefore, that the Leftist parties in the alliance in Tamilnad reviewed their relations with the DMK. It has always been known that the mass base the DMK has acquired over the years does not legitimately belong to a party without a policy or programme beneficial in economic and social terms to the common people. Sections of the population whose sympathy should have been with the parties of the Left have been allowed to be won over by means of oratory and chauvinistic slogans.

The Madras City verdict can

well provide the starting point for a new phase in the State's politics if the leftist parties give up the inhibitions which have prevented them from being outspoken so far. If, as some wishfully except, such a development leads to a split in the DMK separating the reactionaries and the progressive elements, it is surely something to be welcomed even if it means a measure of political instability for a period. If the DMK is helped to split, polarisation of the two sections in the State may conceivably be expedited, by means of direct appeal to the poor and middle classes, particularly those owing allegiance to the DMK at the moment. The civic elections have also shown that the student community is not solidly with the DMK any more; this is a factor that should be taken advantage of by the Leftist to improve their

own position.

The Congress Party leaders have reason to feel happy; the strategy of introducing younger elements and new faces has paid dividends. But it is doubtful if the new factionalism in the Tamilnad Congress will allow the party to pursue the logic of this strategy in the coming period.

But all this requires that the Leftist parties in the State must first reach a basic understanding among themselves about the prevailing situation and the best ways of fighting reactionary forces, whether they are in the DMK or in the Congress. Whether these parties have the leadership necessary for this purpose, and whether the national centres of these parties will take up a positive attitude unlike in the past, are the two questions that remain open.

DOMINO THEORY GOES OVERBOARD

(Continued from Page 11)

neutralist policy the government has been putting down rebellions by various communist factions, without any interference from the Chinese Government. The Chinese did try to interfere recently but that was on another issue and the Ne Win Government took drastic action against the rebels. Cambodia too, though under pressure, has maintained its policy of independence and neutrality and has not been subjected to Chinese military aggression or even to a policy of, sustained subversion. These countries offer a marked contrast to Laos and Thailand, the two countries where there is an American military and political presence. In Laos the war is perhaps an extension of the Vietnam war, but Thailand was for long the most stable and peaceful country in the region. It is however the only country in the region which is totally committed to the American position in Vietnam and the growth of the Patriotic Liberation Front can be

directly linked to the American presence. In Thailand the anti-American resentment among the people is perhaps stronger than in Burma or Cambodia. It is thus, not Chinese actions, but the American presence that has helped the growth of pro-Chinese sentiment, for faced with the fact of virtual American occupation the people have looked on China, the other great active power in the region, as a friend.

The domino theory was always of doubtful validity. Vietnam going Communist will not mean that either Thailand, Cambodia, Burma or Malaysia will collapse one by one. The only country to be affected will be Laos; the future of the other States will not depend on whether a settlement is reached in Vietnam, or whether American presence is maintained in continental Asia but on their ability to cope with their internal problems. No military alliance and no regional grouping whether it goes under the initials of SEATO, ASPAC or ASEAN can save them. Only if they bring the people into the process

of decision making and give them a stake in the country can bring hope to survive. It is thus a matter of political democracy and economic planning for the countries of South East Asia, the real threat is not from China but from the small cliques who consider political and economic power as their prescriptive right. Unless there is a change in their attitude and mental make up their power will crumble away. An American military presence will make matters worse for it will lead the ruling classes to believe that reforms are not imperative and that American military power will ensure that the social system remains unchanged. The Vietnam tragedy should convince Asian statesmen that foreign intervention cannot shore up a corrupt regime, that real strength lies in internal cohesion, unity and having a national purpose. The reaction of the South East Asian leaders to the bombing halt is an indication that this lesson has not been learned and they are still yearning for an American military presence.

(To be Continued)

Need for Codification

S. P.

THE law relating to contempt which originated with Anglo-Saxon monarchs when the King was the fountain of all justice is out-moded and out-of-date in the present democratic set-up.

An undefined law of contempt is incompatible with the concept of individual liberty as it is envisaged and recognised under the Constitution. The law of contempt originated not because the Society wanted to confer any special power in the judiciary to protect its dignity or authority, but because the autocratic monarch administered justice in his own way and anybody disobeying the King had to be punished summarily and severely.

The word 'contempt' is not defined anywhere in the statute. From judge-made law which has developed over the centuries, the concept of contempt and broadly be specified under three heads :—

- (i) Wilful disobedience of the Orders of the Court ;
- (ii) Interference with the Administration of Justice ;
- (iii) Scandalising the Court by personal attack of an individual Judge or bringing into contempt the judicial process itself.

This last category of contempt is the most uncertain and is dependent upon the predilections of an individual judge : Whether a certain act constitutes contempt or not is largely dependent on that imponderable element which may be described as the mental make-up of the judge. One judge may hold a certain statement to be contempt whereas another judge may acquit the contemner on the same facts. In other words, the concept of contempt varies with individual judges like the concept of equity varied with the Chancellors foot in days of yore.

A well-defined law of contempt is essential because such a law tends to interfere with the

freedom of speech as also the liberty of an individual.

It is notable that in some of the Western countries the law of contempt is unknown. In England, for instance it is only a responsible authority like the Attorney General who can lay contempt proceedings after due consideration of the material against an individual. But in India no such safeguard exists and any person can be harassed by anyone who may, out of mischief or vertence institute an action for contempt.

On April 1, 1960 Sri Bibhuti Bhushan Das Gupta introduced in the Lok Sabha a Bill relating to contempt of Courts. On examination of the Bill, the Government felt that the law relating to contempt was uncertain, undefined and unsatisfactory and particularly in view of the constitutional changes that had taken place in the country, placed the Bill before a Select Committee consisting of high dignitaries such as the then Additional Solicitor-General of India and several others and these eminent jurists were asked to examine the law relating to contempt and to suggest recommendations for codification of the law in the light of the examination made by them.

Detailed suggestions and recommendations were made by this Select Committee and it was suggested that administration of justice being essential for the preservation of liberty, nothing should be done which may tend to undermine that confidence. It was also suggested that since the law of contempt trenches upon two important fundamental rights, namely, right to personal liberty and freedom of speech and expression, the law of contempt should be viewed from the stand-point of these rights rather than on the basis of its origin or its present position in other countries. It was further suggested

that a right of appeal as of right, should be provided against any order or decision of the High Court in its jurisdiction to punish for contempt. It was suggested that an appeal should lie to a bench of two Judges when the order is an order of a single judge and to the Supreme Court when the Order is that of a Division Bench of the High Court.

Broadly speaking, these were some of the useful suggestions made by the Committee and a Bill was introduced in Parliament and was called the 'Contempt of Courts Bill 1963'. It is unfortunate that parliamentarians have lost sight of the importance of the subject and there has been no codification of the law even today.

The imperative need of today is codification and amendment of the law of contempt so that there is no curtailment of the Fundamental Rights guaranteed under the Constitution. This can be achieved by defining the word 'contempt' with such clarity as not to leave the interpretation to the idiosyncracies of an individual judge. It is further absolutely essential to treat contempt as an 'offence' and to provide for a regular trial where the contemner may be heard in respect of charge levelled against him. Today the only course open before contemner to tender an object unconditional apology if he wants to avoid going to prison.

It is further necessary to provide that the Judge who commits a man for contempt would not be the judge to hear the case. In such a situation, the case may be transferred to another Judge of coordinate jurisdiction. It may also be provided that in the case of private complaints, sanction from the Advocate General of the state must be obtained before instituting any proceedings as has been done in England on the recommendations of the Shawcross Committee.

Unless these essential safeguards are provided as also a right of appeal to a higher forum, the law relating to contempt can never harmonise with an enlightened democracy which stands for individual rights and fundamental freedoms.

VISHAKHAPATNAM SURRENDER

MANY of the twists and turns in official economic policy over the years have often been allowed to go by under the respectable term of "pragmatism". Lately, they are beginning to show for what they really are—as downright opportunism. This stands out most clearly on the crucial question of foreign aid.

Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission said the other day that when in its document on Approach to the Fourth Five Year Plan, the Commission proposed early this year reduction in net foreign aid inflow to half the present levels by 1973-74, the foreign aid experts in the Government frowned upon the idea and made it known that the Commission was being unnecessarily squeamish about accepting foreign aid in the scheme of India's economic development. They were quite convinced at that time that large doses of foreign aid will continue to be available for many years to come and the country should be ready and willing to receive it and make proper use of it.

The same foreign aid experts are now telling the Commission that even the lower levels of foreign aid for the Plan assumed in the Approach document will just not be available and the public sector part of the Plan will have to be drawn up in the light of this development. Such advice has become particularly persistent after Finance Minister Morarji Desai's return from the meetings of the World Bank and the IMF last month. Since there is no intention to take any radical measures to step up internal resources mobilisation for the public sector, which can make up for at least to some extent the expected shortfalls in foreign aid, the only consequence seen

in this development is that the Plan sizes will have to be smaller than even the modest scale earlier envisaged.

In the public, however, brave postures about self-reliance and doing without aid, if necessary, have become quite fashionable, specially at the level of political leaders even if they impress hardly any one in the official circles that are engaged in the more specific job of working out the consequences of less foreign aid on future rate and character of economic growth in the prevailing social and political situation. In fact, the public protestations and talk of self-reliance and doing without aid are just cast aside when actual decisions are taken inside the Government. This was shown most forcefully in the recent approval of the American firm, Occidental Oil Company's proposals for the setting up of a fertilizer plant at Vishakhapatnam in Andhra.

The Occidental proposal—pending since long and now approved and a Letter of Intent issued on that basis—incorporates in their extreme form all the features of the fertilizer policy of surrender when it was first conceived nearly three years ago and then presented by a committee of Secretaries to the American and other foreign investors as an inducement for coming into India, in fertilizers to begin with and then in other strategic fields. The policy, when it came to be known in public, evoked such strong protest within the country and so strongly resisted that in no case so far has it been applied to the full. In one or two cases, even where some of its features were allowed to be retained, it was done extremely apologetically as exceptional cases and justified in the name of special considera-

tions attached to them together with the assurances that there would be no repetition of such terms.

There was, for instance, the case of the Madras fertilizer plant which was closely linked to the Madras refinery project. The Government retained majority share in the fertilizer project but the American company holding minority share was allowed management and technical control for a period of time. When this arrangement was objected to, the Government had finally to give the solemn assurance that this would not be permitted in future.

Again, in the case of the fertilizer plant at Kanpur in which the Imperial Chemical Industries was allowed to occupy majority position, the arrangement was justified on the ground that the venture being an extension of the existing Indian Explosives project would also result in reducing the majority of the ICI in that project. It was therefore treated as an exceptional case which would not set the pattern elsewhere.

Finally, the Dharamsay Morarji-Kuwait project was approved, after once rejected, on the ground that it would assure a steady supply of sulphur in conditions where sulphur availability was becoming very difficult and tight. This was also said to be a special case which would not be treated as a precedent.

After the approval of the Dharamsay Morarji proposal, which incidentally later ran into fresh difficulties, controversies erupted inside the Government and were widely published on the question of collaboration terms in the fertilizers. The failure of the Petroleum and Chemical Ministry to secure approval for

the giant Tata project was some time thought to represent a turn towards a more self-reliant approach to the problem of setting up fertilizer capacities in the country. This was specially so regarded because in the course of the last three years India has developed and built up expertise and capability to undertake the setting up of fertilizer plants of every kind entirely on its own, the only gap being some parts of specialised equipment which could be imported from a variety of sources against commercial credits which are freely available in the international market. The poor showing of collaboration deals in the private sector and the rapid progress of the public sector programme when allowed to be undertaken without foreign participation could also be regarded as the reason for shedding reliance on foreign capital in this vital sector. The fact is that, in spite of the failure of the foreign collaboration arrangements to fructify, the country has been able to reach quite close to achieving the target set for 1971 and there is no reason to think that the bigger target for the end of the new Fourth Plan will be impossible to reach even if foreign element is totally dispensed with.

And yet, suddenly, the Cabinet is reported to have approved within a matter of minutes without any one dissenting the Occidental proposal. Under the arrangements now envisaged for the Vishakhapatnam project, the Occidentals will have more than 52 percent share in its capital structure and therefore in effective ownership, management and technical control. *This will be the first fertilizer project in which a foreign company from the USA will have this commanding position under the new fertilizer policy.* Nothing has yet been decided about the Indian partners in the project. The Letter of Intent has been issued to the American company. The fertilizer policy under which it is to be set up envisages that the foreign company will be free to make its own choice of the Indian partners but the Government of India will be under the obligation to provide

the necessary rupee finance for it. Such an arrangement will presumably apply for the first time in this case—in all other cases a reputable Indian party is in the picture in the scheme of collaboration. Finally, the Occidentals have been given the right to import liquid ammonia to begin with and that when they eventually switch to naphtha, the Government is committed to make supplies, if necessary by imports, for the required feedstock. The Occidentals will, of course, enjoy together with other fertilizer manufacturers all the advantages of prices and marketing holiday, even though the present arrangements have been approved much after the deadline set for these concessions to operate. Thus, the Occidentals could manage to secure all the terms of concessional entry, long after the deadline, which the Government did not find it possible to extend to others earlier. It is not difficult to see that the objections to the proposed Tata project hadly stand any chance after the Occidentals deal, and it is reported that active negotiations on the Tata proposals have again been resumed after they had remained suspended for some time.

What is so sinister about this development which represents total surrender to foreign capital such as had not taken place earlier is that it comes in the midst of so much fanfare about self-reliance, specially when its practice has become a far more practical and realisable proposition than was the case when the fertilizer policy was conceived three years ago. More significant is that fact that it has been carried through within two months of the resignation of Sri Ashoka Mehta as Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals, without any dissent in the Cabinet whatever. Even Sri Ashoka Mehta had never succeeded in getting such arrangements accepted as have now been granted to the Occidentals after he left the government.

It would also be naive to think that only the pressure of the State government of Andhra for a project of this kind and an Andhra Minister at the Centre, Sri Rag-

huramaiha, being in charge of the Petroleum Ministry, could do the trick for a project to be located in that State. The Andhra factor might have somewhat expedited the decision but could not have been and was not the main factor. A significant policy direction is in fact indicated by this decision.

Having lost hope of receiving large government-to-government or institutional foreign aid such as from or through the World Bank and IDA, the government has been looking desperately for other avenues for foreign capital inflow. Whatever half-hearted resistance existed within the Government to the onerous terms for foreign private capital investment would appear to be breaking down now, if it has not already broken down. It is not the first time that, while talking loudly for public consumption about self-reliance, the government has surrendered to foreign pressures when the squeeze is really applied. A notable parallel was seen after the conflict with Pakistan when government-to-government aid was suspended by the Western powers. Even at that time a desperate attempt was made to woo foreign private capital as the alternative supplier of foreign capital. The only difference is that there was still some honesty left in the government and the then Finance Minister, Sri F.T. Krishnamachari loudly proclaimed Government's keenness, indeed preference for foreign private capital investment over official credits. The present Government is attempting to pursue this line on the quiet without coming out in the open. When the Ministers go abroad, they are, of course, less reticent. The latest to hold forth on the hospitality of India to foreign capital is Commerce Minister, Sri Dinesh Singh at his meeting with American tycoons during his recent visit to the USA to present a report to UN on the UNCTAD. The decision to drop the idea of outlining a more restrictive policy on foreign collaboration in a new Government resolution—not very much noted at the time it was made—was obviously highly significant in this context.

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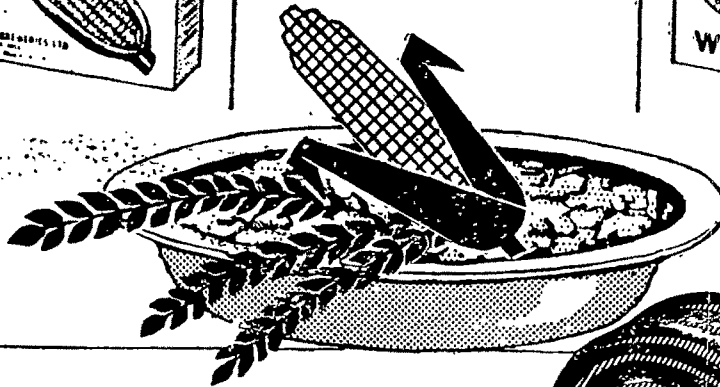
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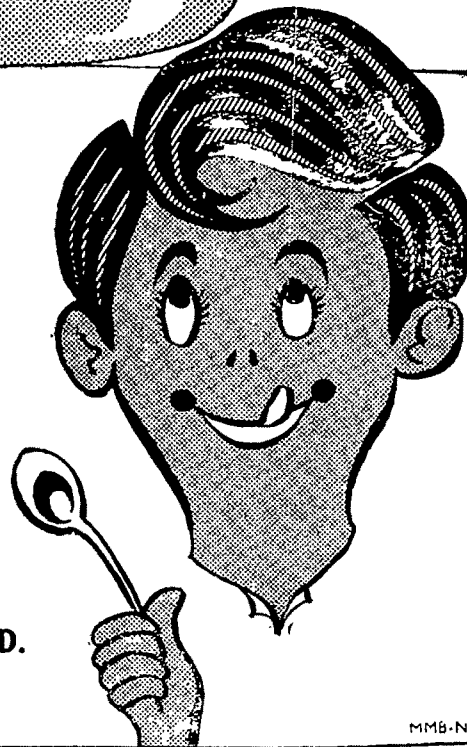


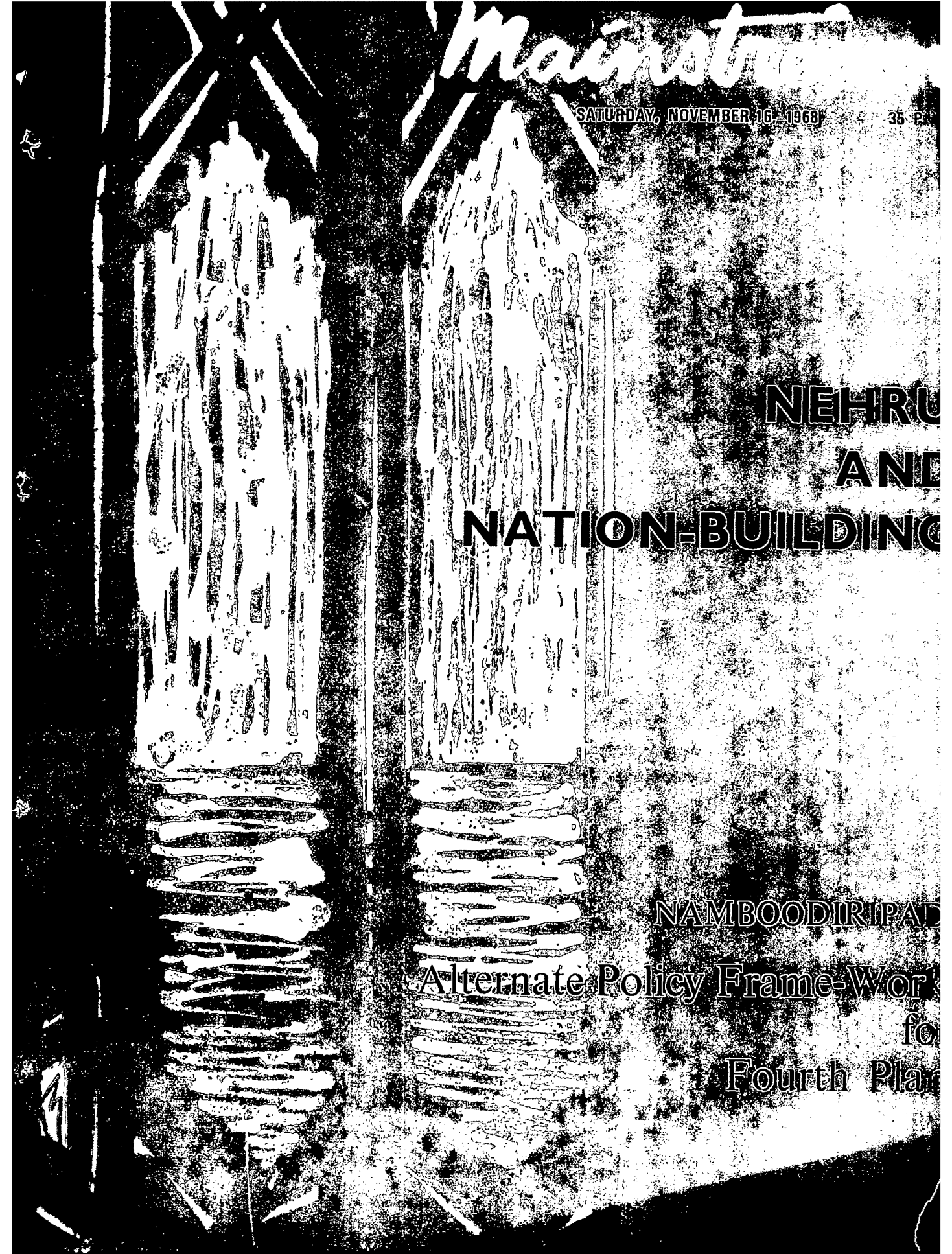
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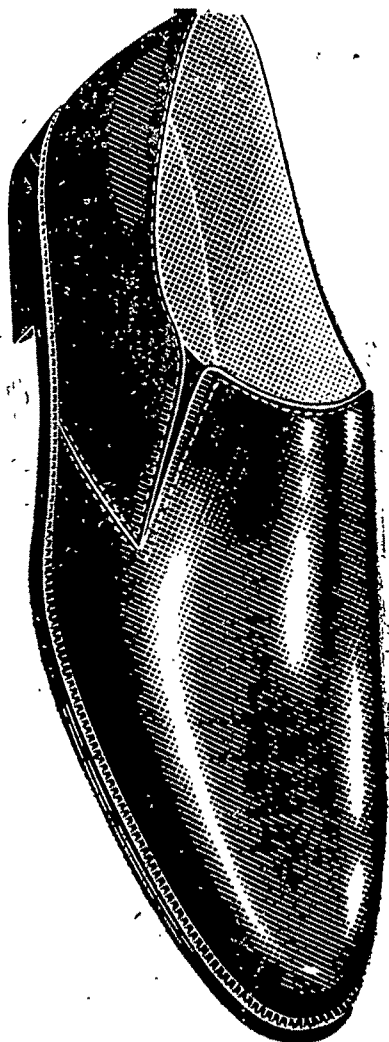
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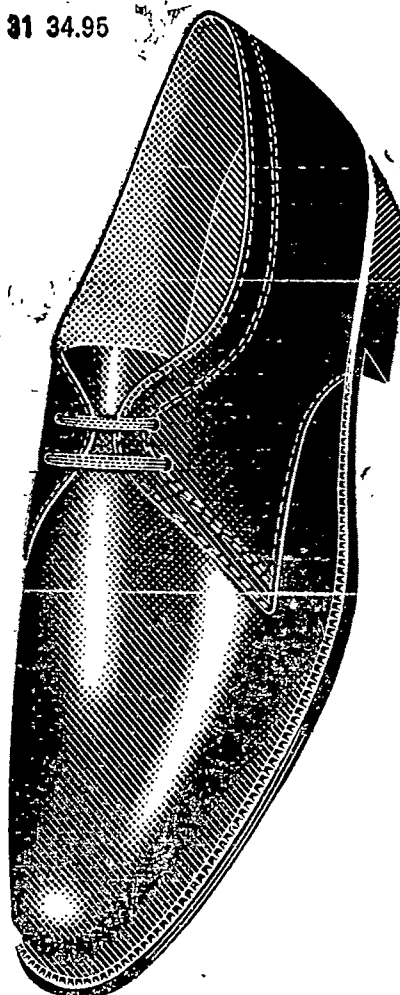
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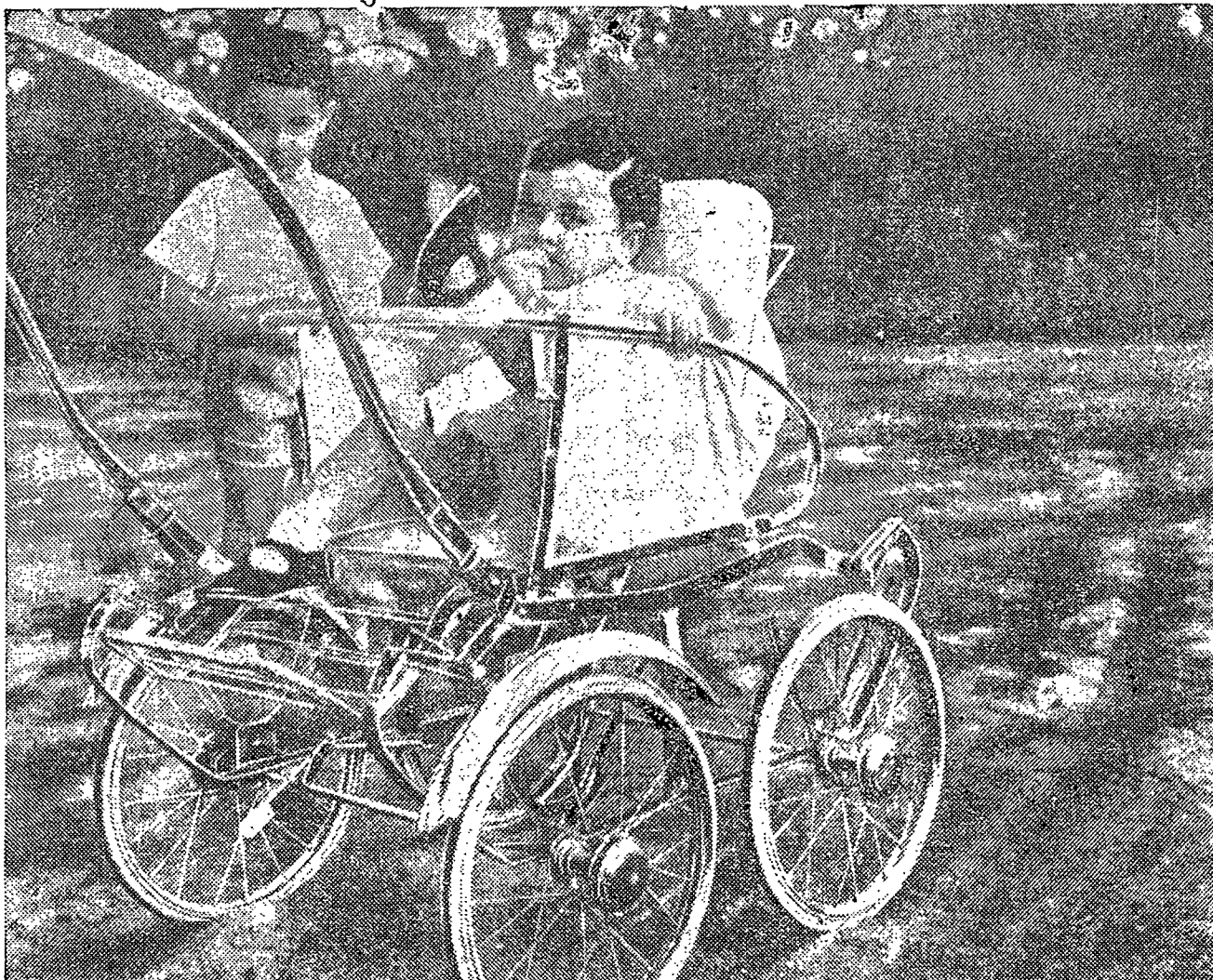
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TOWARDS UNITED STRUGGLE

India's divided trade union movement took a heartening step forward last week when representatives of virtually all central trade union organisations met in a convention in the Capital to draw up a common plan of action to resist the concerted attack by the Government and the employers on the fundamental and inalienable rights of the working people. The convention and its decisions clearly demonstrated that labour leaders, irrespective of political affiliations and with the sole exception of those of the INTUC, are fully aware that the onslaughts on workers' rights which have been intensified in the last few years can be met only on the basis of the united strength of the entire working class.

Although it had been evident for some time that the Government's Labour policy was undergoing a change in favour of the employers and against the interests of the workers, it was only when the Centre brought in legislation to put down bank employees' agitations for better conditions and for nationalisation of banking that all trade union leaders first collectively became aware of the extent of the developing danger. And when to deal with the one-day token strike of Central Government employees the Union authorities armed themselves with sweeping powers under the Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance and began large-scale victimisation, it was established that the plan was to crush the employees and deprive them of their trade union rights. The move to enact permanent legislation on the lines of the Ordinance confirmed this reading. Other indicators of the new attitude to labour were provided by the fate of several wage awards, notably the ones relating to newspaper employees and electricity undertakings, and by the way big business owners of newspapers were allowed to have their way even after an unprecedented two-month strike by the employees.

These are some of the major factors that led to the central trade union bodies deciding that the working people could no longer meet these concerted attacks by means of isolated struggles, however united the workers and however determined the struggle in each case. Once it was clear that the Government and private employers were proceeding on the basis of perfect mutual understanding on ways to break the resistance and morale of the workers step by step, the answer obviously was to forge a united front of the working people on a national scale. It is natural that the central trade union organisations should have come to this conclusion; the welcome feature is that having so decided they did not allow their political affiliations to come in the way of swift action, that they immediately came together to chalk out a programme to meet the threat effectively.

The convention rightly concerned itself mainly with the massive attack launched on the working people by the Union and State Governments. It was in the move to place the obnoxious provisions of the Ordinance on the statute book a sinister plan to go about depriving all the workers in the country of their hard-earned rights of collective action and collective bargaining, including the right to withhold work. The convention came to the conclusion that "this sustained and deliberate attack on the most vital and basic trade union rights can be met and defeated only by the widest and militant unity of workers and employees in whichever section or industry they may be." It was decided to launch a "dogged and sustained movement" in defence of these rights.

The convention's significance lies in the fact that after long years genuine trade union unity is being attempted on the national scale on issues of intimate concern to the working people all over the country. The need-based minimum wage, the norms for which were settled at the tripartite eleven years back, is among the major issues that will figure in the coming nationwide agitation. The agitation, properly organised, should defeat the attempts being made by interested parties to divide workers on the pretext that some of them are better paid than the others, glossing over the fact that this situation is the result of the policies deliberately pursued by the Government. The massive working class agitation may well become the beginning of a mighty struggle for radical economic and social changes in the country. There is need for caution against the activities of splitters and communalists, but these can be isolated if the leaders are united in purpose and determined in action.

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A LANDMARK IN DECADENCE

THE Goa session of the AICC will be remembered as a landmark in the decline of the Congress.

Jawaharlal Nehru and other sensitive Congressmen had become aware of the rot that had set in in the Congress by the middle of 1963. They sought to check it and give national policies a new direction by initiating a discussion in the AICC on the content of Indian socialism. They also wanted the AICC to redefine the objectives of our revolution in concrete terms so that public opinion could be built and resistance generated to pressures from international and local reaction.

After the death of Jawaharlal Nehru, these efforts received a setback, but Sri Kamaraj, whatever his failings as president of the party, had the same social purpose in view. He therefore tried to maintain the deliberative character of the AICC. It was necessary for Sri Kamaraj to do so for other reasons also. First, in a period of transition (from the Nehru to the post-Nehru era) it was necessary to involve the party in determination of policies not merely with a view to ensuring party support for them but also to strike a balance between different forces working within the party. Secondly, the power which Sri Kamaraj wielded and which enabled him to play the consensus-maker was mainly derived from his standing in the party.

However, as Congress politics was reduced to mere manipulation of inner-party factions, the AICC ceased to influence decision-making even in the days of Sri Kamaraj; this was quite clear from the fate of the so-called 10-point programme. But after Sri Nijalingappa took over from Sri Kamaraj the party organs have

become redundant. This is because Sri Nijalingappa became Congress President as a result of behind-the-scene manipulations. It was clear even at Hyderabad where he was installed that whatever power he has, is derived from manipulation of inner-party factions for which it is necessary to avoid discussion within the party on issues facing it.

Some younger MPs requisitioned a meeting of the AICC to discuss economic problems; he agreed to summon the AICC with great reluctance and even then tried to restrict discussions and in violation of the spirit of the party constitution allowed other unimportant issues to be raised at the session. This was during last summer when the AICC met at New Delhi. But when another group of AICC members requisitioned a meeting to discuss prohibition, he not only readily summoned it at Goa but also scuttled attempts to raise other important issues at the meeting by announcing at the out-set that economic problems would be taken up at the next session.

Most of the time at Goa was taken up by a discussion on the prohibition policy, although everyone was convinced that the present trend of relaxation of dry laws could be reversed and aware also that in any case in a number of States the Congress was not in power to enforce its policy with regard to a subject which lay in the State List. A number of members pointed out that there were more important questions facing the party and the country and if they were not taken up it was because the very purpose of holding the session was to divert attention from those issues. The requisition for the earlier AICC meeting by the younger MPs was

taken as an attempt to embarrass Mr. Morarji Desai who presides over the Finance Ministry and has so much enlarged his empire as to determine the direction as also the tempo of all economic activity. The requisition on prohibition was a counter-blast meant to embarrass his detractors by holding them responsible for the failure of prohibition.

At Goa, Mr. Desai and his supporters who had requisitioned the meeting made prohibition an emotional issue by linking it with the Gandhi Centenary celebrations. All attempts to keep the discussion on a rational plane failed and at one stage Mr. Desai threatened not merely to defy the Congress President and speak in the open session but also to press to vote the demand for complete prohibition within a fixed time-limit. No one was against prohibition on principle. But the State bosses as practical men pointed out the difficulties in enforcing a measure of social reform with the help of legal processes. They were backed by the Congress President himself and also the Chief Ministers of the three biggest Congress-governed States, Andhra, Maharashtra and Mysore.

They pointed out why it had become necessary to relax the dry laws and in some States even scrap prohibition altogether. They said they needed revenue for other important items of the party programme such as provision of drinking water; unless some of these items were taken up in all seriousness the Congress could not hope to win in the next general election. They referred to the findings of the Tek Chand Committee. They pointed out that if prohibition was an article of faith with Gandhiji and was among the

Directive Principles of the Constitution, there were other articles of faith also which Gandhiji had taught Congressmen and there were other provisions of the Directive Principles of the Constitution which should be given priority over prohibition. But these arguments did not carry much weight with Mr. Desai and his supporters who were bent on measuring strength with the State bosses, for unlike the bosses whose influence is confined to their respective States Mr. Desai has some sort of an inter-State following.

The debate however clearly showed that Mr. Desai was keen on removing the impression that he was prepared to identify himself with the State bosses; in fact it appeared that he was anxious to demonstrate that the distance between him and the State bosses was as wide as between him and the Prime Minister. Mr. Desai's only gain at Goa was that he showed that he can neither be ignored nor taken for granted. On the question of prohibition he only got a promise that a national policy would be formulated by 2nd October, 1969 which would enable Congress Governments in States still under their rule to enforce prohibition in course of seven years. But between now and 2nd October, 1969 there is enough time to sabotage attempts to formulate a national policy and till then, as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Mysore and Andhra have declared, the present trend towards relaxation of dry laws will continue.

The Prime Minister and her supporters kept out of the confrontation between Mr. Desai and the State bosses, and intervened to work out a compromise resolution only when it became clear that nobody wanted the demand for complete prohibition within a fixed time-limit to be put to vote. She may be criticised for failure to provide leadership to the party. But it was not necessary for her to take up a stand on this issue, and in any case she was able to demonstrate her skill at keeping two rival groups of party men, both bent on undermining her position, to-

gether. In a party composed of men committed to one or other faction, she can retain her position only by allowing the rival factions to face each other and intervening when the confrontation becomes a threat to party unity.

On another issue also there was a confrontation between the State bosses and Mr. Desai. It related to the campaign which Mr. K. Hanumanthaiya is carrying on for an enquiry into the allegations against Sri Nijalingappa. In fact Sri Hanumanthaiya had given notice of a resolution for the AICC asking the Government to institute an inquiry into the allegations. Sri Nijalingappa as Congress President was inclined to rule it out on the ground that such a demand should be raised either in Parliament or in the State Assembly. He had accordingly informed Sri Hanumathaiya who in his long reply gave the reasons which prompted him to demand an inquiry. Sri Hanumathaiya also made it clear in his reply that he would pursue the demand without regard to consequences. His factional loyalties are well known, although lately he has come closer to the Prime Minister's supporters as well. The States bosses demanded that disciplinary action should be taken against him for carrying on a campaign against the party chief who is one of them. Sri Atulya Ghosh proposed that the Working Committee pull up Sri Hanumanthaiya. Sri Desai and others resisted the demand and succeeded as a compromise in getting the issue referred to the disciplinary action committee for examination.

The only other resolution which came up at the Goa session was the one on Gandhi Centenary. But the tasks laid down for Congressmen in the resolution reveal the bankruptcy of Congress leadership in every direction. One of the tasks is to provide drinking water and another is to propagate the concepts of secularism and composite nationalism. But even in regard to these the demand of the party's middle-rung leaders, including

two State Congress Presidents, Maharashtra's Hafizka and Kashmir's Mir Qasim, for a campaign against communal forces, was not acceptable to the Central leaders. The Prime Minister spoke against communal forces and even Sri Desai criticised the disruptive theory of Hindu Rashtra, but neither took note of the danger which the emergence of aggressive Hindu communalism poses to national life today. In this regard even the Congress Left, which had the courage to expose the hypocrisy of the party's professions about prohibition and to vote against the prohibition resolution, failed to realise the gravity of the danger. Instead, the Congress Left pressed for conversion of Birla House where Gandhiji was killed into a national monument—and suprisingly all those who swore by Gandhiji while pleading for immediate prohibition voted against it.

To sum up, the Goa session was a waste of time, energy and money. It seems that both the Congress President and the Prime Minister were conscious of the futility of holding such sessions. Sri Nijalingappa suggested that the number of AICC sessions should be reduced; this suggestion was in line with the moves of the State bosses to throttle free and frank discussion in the party. The Prime Minister suggested that in future sessions should be held to discuss specific issues and after necessary preparation; this suggestion was in line with the attempts of her supporters, like Sri C. Subramaniam, to streamline and modernise the party. Will such organisational measures help to revitalise the Congress and check its decline?

—G.M.

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Nehru and Nation-Building

C.P. BHAMBHRI

DURING the struggle for freedom, Nehru was spreading the message of his value-beliefs among the masses of India. After Independence he got an opportunity to translate his social and political ideas into practice with the help of state power. It is worthwhile to examine how far Nehru succeeded in achieving his goals and objectives.

Before attempting an evaluation of Nehru, it is appropriate to describe in brief the tasks that Nehru had set for himself. In pre-independence days, Nehru had repeatedly said that he was a republican and a socialist. In his presidential address at the Lahore Session of the Congress (December, 1929) he stated :

"The philosophy of socialism has gradually permeated the entire structure of the society the world over. And almost the only point in dispute is the pace and methods of advance to its full realization. India will have to go that way too if she seeks to end her poverty and inequality, though she may evolve her own methods and may adopt the ideal to the genius of her race."

Thus socialism, equality, freedom for the individual, and democracy were the cherished goals of Nehru. Further, he stood for secularism, a scientific attitude towards life and industrialization of the country. He was clear in his mind that only industrialization would

liberate the Indian masses from the shackles of mediaevalism and poverty born out of colonial domination. Thus quintessence of Nehruism can be stated as :

"It is based upon a secular rather than a sacred view of human relations, a rational outlook, an acceptance of the substance and spirit of the scientific approach a vigorous application of an expanding technology, an industrialized organization of production, and a generally humanistic and popularistic set of values for political life."

The institutional arrangement created by Nehru to achieve these values, was a Constitution, an elected Parliament, a Planning Commission, and an expanding Public Sector. Democratic Parliament and economic Planning (with its system of institutional arrangement) were the main pillars of Nehru's efforts at nation-building.

The question that arises is : Did this value structure and institutional arrangement become an accepted philosophy of a large number of people in the country ? Is this legacy of Nehru safe in the post-Nehru India ? The answer to these questions will determine the success or failure of Nehru in nation-building.

II

NEHRU'S values and institutional arrangements for the management of national affairs evoked different responses from different segments of the Indian elite.

His philosophy of economic planning was attacked by the Rightists as encouraging statism, leading to a progressive diminution of individual freedom and private initiative. According to them planning stifled the spirit of individual enterprise. On the other hand, the Leftists appreciated the role of "public enterprise" but criticized the Public Sector undertakings for being bureaucratically managed institutions, which in actual working went against the spirit of socialism. Further, economic Planning in the country helped the rich and the disparities between the classes in the country went on increasing during the period the Nehru's economic Planning. Economic Planning in India helped the growth of monopolies and the concentration of wealth in a few hands. Economic Planning instead of establishing a socialist society strengthened capitalism in India. Thus Nehru was criticized by both the Left and the Right though for different reasons.

His another pillar of nation-building was political democracy in the form of periodic elections, adult franchise etc. Nehru believed that in building modern India, people's active support and popular participation were essential. Not only this. Through the medium of these elections and the adult franchise, Nehru wanted to create consciousness among the people regarding their role in the processes of nation-building. Again among the elite, there is a difference

Dr Bhambhri is a Reader in the Department of Political Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

of opinion regarding the effectiveness of democracy as established by Nehru in India. The response of the elite to the functioning of democracy is mainly of three kinds.

First, opposition has come from a section of the elite who believe that Nehru imposed Western ideas and institutions on a society whose soil is quite unsuitable for the functioning of such institutions. It is argued that Western type of party democracy does not suit the genius of India. Hence we should have a communitarian type of democracy, with the place of pride given to the village panchayats. These critics of Nehru betray romantic clinging to the past, to an imaginary golden age which they would like to come back. It was suggested that the issue is the management of diversity and unity, more specially the need to relate the parochial and the universal, to fuse basic components of the indigenous culture with the standards and practices to the modern world. Nehru was criticized for ignoring the past, on whose basis only the present and the future could be built.

Secondly, opposition has come from the capitalists who say that democracy has created great social conflicts in the country and that sectional demands have assumed greater importance than the desire to add to the size of the national cake by producing more wealth. Democracy is being viewed as the anti-thesis to the economic development of the country. It is argued that the worst casualty of Indian democracy has been economic production.

The third and the last attack on Nehru has come from the socialists who allege that democracy in India is a tool in the hands of the capitalists. The entrenched classes are using it for their own benefit.

III

IF both the Rightists and the Leftists are unhappy with Nehru, then the question arises : where exactly did Nehru fail ? His failure lay at three different

levels :

(a) He could not create any 'symbols' around which the masses of India could rally. He described the Bhakhra Dam and the Bhilai Steel Plant as 'New Temples', but they did not replace the old symbols which were ingrained in the minds of the Indians during the past thousands of years. He wanted to change the attitudes and ways of thinking of the masses, but he could not establish concrete alternatives to the images cherished by the people. Thus modernization, scientific temper, secularism—all remained paper slogans.

(b) His values did not percolate down to the masses. What to say of the masses, even his partymen and cabinet colleagues remained unconvinced about the validity of many of Nehru's ideas. The almost unceremonious farewell to the policy of 'Independence and non-alignment', given by the successors of Nehru illustrates this point. Thus compeers and compatriots shed no tears on the demise of India's foreign policy.

(c) Nehru did not build any political movement or party for the preservation or perpetuation of his values. The Congress Party as it is constituted could hardly act as the defender of Nehru's ideology. Nehru was a keen student of world history. He knew it very well that ideas can shake the world if they become part of a movement. He admired Lenin, but did not learn anything from him. He acknowledged it in the *Discovery of India* that : "A study of Marx and Lenin produced a powerful effect on my mind and helped me to see history and current affairs in a new light." But Marx had also said that the time had come to change history. This could only be achieved by a strong political movement committed to the ideology of change.

Nehru's strategy of nation-building was defective. In the absence of a cadre of committed party workers, and a network of media of communication, the message of ideology cannot spread. Those leaders who live from hand to mouth, who simply concern themselves with the pro-

blems of today, and who have no vision of tomorrow can afford to ignore the importance of party workers. But Nehru was different. With all his faults, he had a clear vision of the future of India. He laid the foundations of modernization and industrialization. Perhaps it would be difficult to reverse this process. But there is a chance element in it. Democracy may be subverted if the entrenched classes fear the challenge of the emerging classes. Socialism and economic planning have already been devalued in the country. Nehru made no attempt to create soldiers of socialism and defenders of democracy. Here lies the greatest failure of Nehru.

On the ideological plane also, Nehru's attempt to follow a middle path between Western liberalism and Marxian socialism created a situation where his ideology is not a part of the inheritance of any party or movement. His attempt to adapt socialism to the Indian genius ended in a confused kind of pragmatism.

This ideological confusion in Nehru becomes clear when in his *The Basic Approach* a stand is taken that the distinction between Capitalism and Socialism is wearing thinner and thinner. He writes : "Socialism is basically a different approach from that of capitalism, though I think it is true that the wide gap between them tends to lessen because many of the ideas of Socialism are gradually incorporated even in the Capitalist structure."

It is not surprising that even in the Left Movement in the country Nehru's impact is insignificant, though his contribution to the making of modern India is generally admired and appreciated by the Left.

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The Values Nehru Symbolised

CHARANJIT YADAV

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU will always occupy a place in history as a leader of Indian freedom struggle, builder of modern India and a powerful supporter of world peace. Jawaharlal's life was inspired by high ideals.

There is no aspect of national life which is without the deep impress of Nehru. His life was dedicated to the service of the common man.

Jawaharlal had a picture of New India before him even when he was leading the freedom movement. The India of his dreams was one based on justice and equality, rich and progressive, a country with a scientific outlook, free from dogma and exploitation.

Immediately after Independence, in order to shape the India of his dreams, he laid the foundations of a four-cornered policy—democracy, planned economy, socialism and secularism. He installed dedication to world peace as the tower of this grand edifice.

The laying down of these ideals is neither hollow idealism nor mere pragmatism; at their base are the needs and requirements, hopes and aspirations of millions of our people, besides the warmth of Indian culture, the nation's future welfare, and a new outlook on life.

Jawaharlal loved the people and in return got affection in abundance from them. He had faith in the collective wisdom of the common people, their talent and ability. He had known their courage, unlimited strength, unparalleled sense of sacrifice and discipline.

After independence he emphasised the need to fully harness these qualities of the common people for their own good. At the same time he knew that mere democracy could become a means of exploitation in the

name of freedom; therefore he presented democracy not in isolation but along with "socialism."

Nehru knew more than anyone else the vastness of India, the sufferings of its people and the intensity of the variegated problems related thereto. His constant aim was a happy life for the common people. He knew this was not a simple task, and that is why he initiated planned economic development of the country. Jawaharlal was sharply criticised for laying the foundation of big steel mills, electricity generation plants, machine manufacturing projects, atomic energy plants and scientific laboratories as also for the plans to extract hidden oil, gas etc. from the womb of the earth. The plans were described as impractical. They were mocked at as imitation of the West. The shortsighted critics could not understand the long-term significance of the plans, and in Nehru's life-time vested interests suffered defeats at his hands. He called these plans the "mandirs" of modern India.

Every basic industry and the basic plan will be part of the 'public sector' which will continue to grow—this was his earnest desire. He repeatedly emphasised that the millions of people of this country are the real owners whose labour creates wealth, but who are bound hand and foot in utter dependence economically and socially—those chains will have to be broken, and the people made joint owners of the wealth of the country. This ideology of Jawaharlal should not be allowed to be weakened; it is our duty to strengthen it.

He was not a religious man but he worshipped human values. He was deeply impressed by

those aspects of Indian civilisation and culture which valued human goodness, but he was acutely conscious of the weaknesses of Indian society.

He wanted to impart to society a scientific and socialist outlook. This was symbolized in the concept of secularism. No religion is alien to it, it hates none. Instead, it presupposes love and brotherhood based on human values. The traditionalist, communal and the reactionary forces are constantly endeavouring to demolish these precious contributions of Jawaharlal. Out of frustration, some progressive forces, in order to gain power, are strengthening the hands of the communal forces.

Jawaharlal was absolutely convinced that India could not be looked at in isolation from the rest of world. That is why, even during the course of the freedom struggle Jawaharlal continued to lay emphasis on India's struggle being part of the wider world struggle of the poor against the imperialists. He supported and lent strength to the liberation strength of the people of every country.

He was the outstanding statesman of the age, who rose above caste, religion and country and sought to find solutions to problems from a universal and human angle. India's foreign policy based on world peace, neutrality between power blocs, friendship and peaceful co-existence was adopted because a towering personality having a world outlook was its initiator.

Let us pledge to carry forward that beacon—light with which Jawaharlal Nehru blazed the path of the country's freedom and progress.

Betrayal of Nehru Legacy

C. N. CHITTA RANJAN

IT is an irony of history that the name of Mahatma Gandhi should within a few years of his martyrdom serve as no more than a mascot for perpetrators and abettors of oppression and exploitation. His name has been mouthed times without number by the very persons who either in office or outside the seats of power have done their best to prevent the realisation of his ideal of social and economic equality. Under the rule of so-called Gandhians over two decades the rich have become richer and infinitely more powerful while the poor, especially the rural poor, stagnate at the very level which moved the Mahatma so profoundly. The persons whom Gandhiji in his goodness wanted to be "trustees" of the nation's economic wealth, have become controllers not only of key sectors of the economy but of the administration itself. The minorities for the protection of whose rights as citizens of this country the Mahatma laid down his life, continue to live in a state of insecurity in many areas, and Harijans, so dear to Bapu, continue to be the victims of caste arrogance and aggression. The hypocritical resolutions on prohibition and the "constructive programme" adopted by the AICC at its Goa session indicate the level to which those who swear by Gandhiji can drag the great name.

But even the disowning of Gandhian ideals has not been so quick as the disowning of the Nehru approach to nation-building. Gandhiji was in a sense utopian since he took the goodness of human nature for granted and based his whole philosophy on the concept of changing hearts. Nehru was an idealist too no doubt, but from the start he showed awareness of the unpracti-

cal nature of the Gandhian approach to the problems of social and economic change, especially in a world moving swiftly forward in the technological age. He therefore made the processes of planning the key to bringing about radical changes in the socio-economic structure of our backward country. It is easy enough to find fault with the way planning has been handled in practical terms; indeed, it is undeniable that many mistakes were made, particularly in the sphere of implementation of Nehru's ideas. But it is not at the same time difficult to see that but for the introduction of the concept of planning at that early stage, even the changes that have come about in the last two decades would not have been possible.

Even while Jawaharlal lived, vested interests and their agents in the Congress Party did their very best to subvert the processes of planning—and in a measure succeeded. Knowing his essential weakness—that of being a democrat given to listening to all viewpoints and accommodating them to the maximum extent possible—they set up a howl over this or that aspect of planning and secured the changes they desired. Not only the big industrialists themselves but also politicians in power and the bureaucracy were engaged in distorting the Industrial Policy Resolution in the course of implementation. Planning was deliberately sought to be used to strengthen big business in particular and the private sector in general, instead of to bring all essential production under public control by stages. The aim of all these elements throughout was to discredit the public sector and reduce planning to the status of an appendage of monopoly capital. In the corrupt politician and the inherited bureaucracy

big business houses found convenient and willing tools to carry out their designs. Nehru's chief fault lay in his inability to make a clean break with the past and with the support of the people which he had on a massive scale set India firmly on the path to socialism. The trouble was that Nehru was not the man to quarrel with his tools, as an eminent journalist has put it. He believed that the changes he dreamt of could be brought about gradually through the instrumentality of the Congress Party. When Congressmen were by and large still imbued with the spirit of the years of the freedom struggle this belief might have been justified, but not in the subsequent years when they had come to look upon participation in public life as a means for self-aggrandisement and personal and family affluence. The administrative apparatus should have been rid of the so-called Steel Frame at the outset, but this was not even thought of; on the other hand the bureaucracy was pampered as a symbol of continuity. Nehru thus launched his revolution doubly handicapped.

If fifteen years of planning has not had a direct impact on the common people's lives, the reason lies here. An example of how things went awry at every step is provided by the fate that overtook the idea of nationalisation. Nehru was easily persuaded by some of his colleagues and vested interests that to take over existing industrial and other units even in vital sectors of the economy was not profitable since huge amounts would have to be paid as compensation. A Gandhian in some ways, takeover of essential industries without compensation would not appeal to him. Nationalisation of life insurance was an aberration; the persons on whom

he had to rely for party and administrative affairs would not permit him to continue the process. Despite full knowledge of the support he enjoyed among the people, Nehru would not assert himself. That is why the question of nationalisation of banks continues to be a matter of fruitless debate to this day; and that is why the former princes, most of whom oppressed and exploited their subjects mercilessly, continue to live in luxury at the public expense.

Despite all his weaknesses, Nehru firmly resisted the attempts to scuttle the processes of planning and establish total *laissez faire* in the country. But he could not succeed in preventing planned subversion from within of the planning mechanism. That those who when he was present professed to believe in planning as the only valid method of bringing about radical changes never really so believed was brought out plainly soon after his death. They had been lending a willing ear to the private-sector call for a plan "holiday" but could not in the earlier stages force it through. But with Nehru's death the road was clear, and the long delay in the formulation of the Fourth Plan is that "holiday" by another name. From the way the Plan debate is going on now, it is clear that the elements opposed to planning and favouring a free hand for monopoly capital, both indigenous and foreign are determined to bring the whole concept into ridicule. We have reached a stage when our economic policies are directly dependent on the willingness or otherwise of interested powers to provide doles with plenty of strings. Nehru's emphasis on planned development was based on the belief that this was the only realistic way to achieve self-reliance; that planning should have been made to depend not on our own strength and resources but on the disposition of governments, institutions and capitalists abroad in fact amounts to the final betrayal of all that Nehru stood for, all that he symbolised for the people of this country.

It is not only in respect of

planned economic development that Nehru's ideas stand betrayed today. All his life he strove to build a secular democracy in which all citizens would have equal status and rights and responsibilities—and in this he followed the path chalked out by the Mahatma. But in today's secular, democratic India not only the religious minorities but even the Scheduled Castes and Tribes face insecurity as a result of the increasing aggressiveness of communal and caste forces. After Gandhiji's martyrdom the communal elements lay low for a long time, and while Nehru was alive they showed their ugly face now and then but never dared to parade as saviours of Hindudom. Today the RSS is openly active in many places including university campuses, and the "Hindu Rashtra" slogan is being frequently raised despite the Government's call against it. The communalists in the seats of power were always in league with the communalists outside, but never was this fact so open and brazen as it is now. Nehru had the stature and the strength to pit himself against these elements; it is the country's misfortune that there is no one in power today who can stand up to the communal and other divisive elements as he could. The answer is collective leadership and action to resist these forces, but there is as yet no sign of it. The RSS is in a position to hold a military-type rally close to the Capital without the authorities being able to do much about it. Caste Hindus in several rural areas in different States are able to launch murderous attacks on Harijans and molest the women with impunity, often with the connivance of the police. The decisions of the National Integration Council and its Standing Committee are yet to be implemented; while the rulers are thinking about these, the communal and caste monsters grow daily stronger and more menacing. There is as yet no effort even to weed out these elements from educational institutions where their influence is helping to create a new

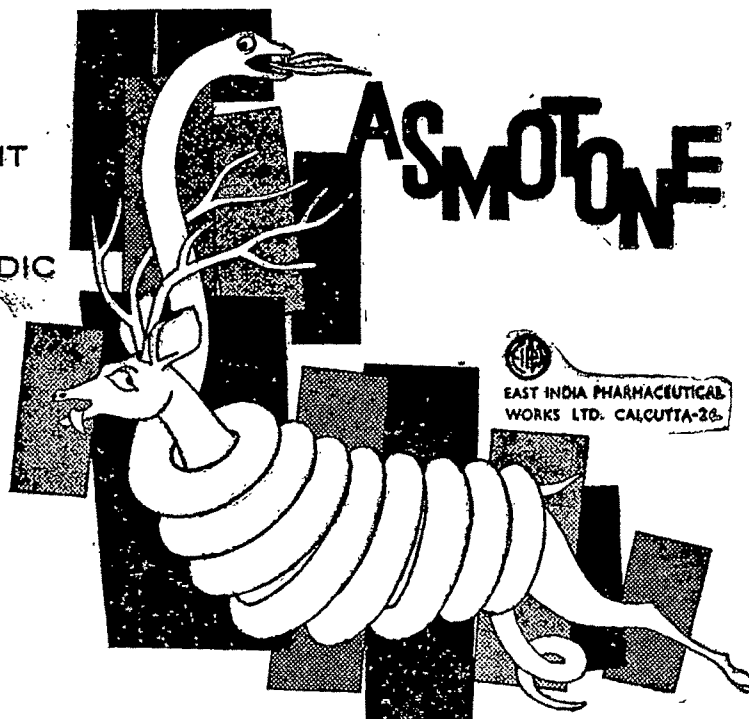
generation of violent, screaming communalists.

It is needless to go into Nehru's burning faith in democracy and change through parliamentary processes and the sharp contrast that obtains today. Respect for democratic institutions has come down considerably for the simple reason that debates, however furious, lead to no improvement in the conditions of the common people. Politics has been reduced to power-seeking, and very few of our politicians are free from this taint.

In the world Jawaharlal Nehru wanted India to be a positive force for peace, a powerful voice against aggression and exploitation. He sought friendship with all countries but never hesitated to speak out against the misdeeds of any. Today our rulers are hesitant, often afraid, to express India's views openly. Indeed there have been one or two stray occasions when the Prime Minister did express herself quite strongly, but such utterances have never been followed up with positive steps which could help the cause of peace and the independence of peoples. Nehru could be equally firm with the West and the East where either national self-respect or problems of war and peace were involved; this cannot be said without qualification of his successors. Perhaps no other question has brought this out as clearly as the one of the barbarities perpetrated by the United States in Vietnam in the last four years.

Nehru achieved little of what he set out to achieve, but there can be no doubt that he laid guidelines which if followed scrupulously and earnestly can lead us on towards the goal of a socialist society playing the vital role of peacemaker in the international sphere. It is these guidelines that are being discarded one by one our present rulers who do not have the capacity to provide viable alternatives that can ensure advance towards the national goals. The result is the confusion and uncertainty that marks national life in all its aspects today.

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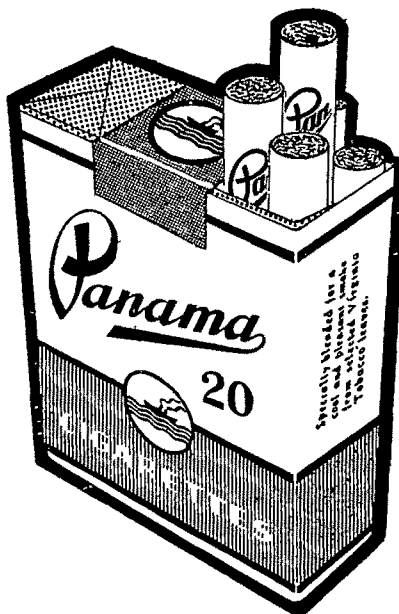
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At a Seminar convened by the Kerala State Planning Board at Trivandrum on October 9-12, 1968, on the subject, "Alternate Policies for the Fourth Five Year Plan," the Chief Minister of Kerala presented the following paper for discussion. As only a summarised version of this has appeared in the press, Mainstream here publishes the full text of it.

—Editor

Towards an Alternate Policy Framework For the Fourth Five Year Plan

E.M.S. NAMBOODIRIPAD

THE starting point of this paper is the following assessment of the planning and developmental process in India :

(a) The postponement of the date on which the Fourth Five-Year Plan is to start (from 1966 to 1969) indicates a serious crisis in the whole planning process in the country.

(b) We will be deluding ourselves and deluding the people if we were to blame this crisis of the Planning process on the border conflicts with China and Pakistan or on the two years of drought, or on both combined.

(c) The root of the crisis in the planning process lies in the fact that the policies pursued were inadequate to serve the main objective of planning—the optimum use of the material and human resources of the nation for the most rapid, industrialisation of the economy and modernisation of all fields of socio-economic activity.

2.- It will be preposterous for the political leadership of the nation (either of the ruling Party or of the Opposition) to abjure its responsibility for laying down correct policies as if, it is for the experts to lay down the policies and on the basis of these policies to elaborate the Plan. The basis of planning being correct policies, it is for the political leadership to create conditions in which experts in the various fields can jointly and separately elaborate plans for developing the natural and human resources of the nation. The failure of the planning process symbolised by three year postponement of the Fourth Five-Year Plan should therefore be considered the failure of the political leadership of the nation.

3. A word about the relation between the planning process and ideology. It is ridiculous to talk of "planning minus ideology". Even those who plead for freedom from ideology have their own ideologies. Their plea is, in fact, for freedom from all ideologies except their own. For instance, the Chief Minister of Orissa was one of those who denounced the "ideological considerations" which, according to him, have vitiated the planning process in our country. Is he himself free from ideology? On the contrary, his own views on how the notional plan should be evolved and implemented are based on what may be called "the ideology of private property

in the means of production"; the ideology of "freedom" for the owners of such private property; the ideology of "equality" between the owners of big property and the owners of small or no property; the ideology of "democracy" under a system of property relations in which the owners of big property control all the media of mass communication and are therefore in a position to mislead and confuse the people; and so on. "Freedom from ideology" means to him freedom for this particular ideology to operate without interference from the ideology of abolishing private property in the means of production. Preservation of the rights of the former rulers is not, but their abolition is, ideology! Maintenance of big landlord estates is not, but their confiscation (or even abolition with compensation) is, ideology!! Preservation of the factories, banks, plantations etc. owned by foreign monopolists is not, but their nationalisation is, ideology!!! So on and so forth. Such is the essence of "planning minus ideology" for which the Chief Minister of Orissa and friends of his way of thinking plead.

4. The concept of planning did, in fact, arise in the course of a worldwide struggle between two ideologies—those of private property (to which the Chief Minister of Orissa adheres) and the ideology of socialism. For several decades did a bitter battle continue as to which of the two ideologies is a more efficient tool of human progress, a better system assuring justice for the common people. The ideology of private property could not be defeated in this struggle so long as it continued to be efficient in bringing about technological and economic advance (even though at all stages it was not doing justice to the mass of working people). The system of feudal property was efficient in this respect for a time and was replaced only when it ceased to be inefficient. The present is a stage in human history when the two systems—capitalism and socialism—are co-existing and contending between themselves for supremacy in the world. This struggle commenced on a worldwide scale with the establishment of Soviet power in Russia and has been continuing since then. The development of the Soviet Union and the establishment of socialist society in several other (European, Asian and even American & as in Cuba) countries

intensified the struggle because it was becoming more and more clear to larger and larger sections of the people that the socialist system is more efficient ; the replacement of capitalism by socialism became a practical question.

5. One of the consequences of this struggle has been the impact of the planning process—started in the USSR and subsequently adopted in several other countries—in our own country ; serious thinking on planning started here after the successful implementation of the first Five-Year Plan in the USSR. Occurring as it did against the background of the most disastrous crisis in the capitalist system (the World Economic Crisis of 1929-1933), the successful completion, by the USSR of its first Five-Year Plan showed the thinking people in our country that our own backward economy can be transformed only through planning. It was therefore inevitable that all thinking on the planning process in India (beginning with the first major work on the subject by the late Sri Visveswarayya) should draw inspiration from the Soviet model and therefore be not completely free from the much-detested “ideological considerations”.

6. The ideology of socialism is superior to that of capitalism (or “mixed economy” as it is called in our country) precisely because the socialist system is more efficient for bringing about the most rapid increase in production on the one hand and in ensuring distributive justice to the majority of people on the other. I would welcome an objective study of all relevant facts and figures to find out which of the two systems—capitalism or socialism—is economically efficient and socially just. I hope that the Planning Commission would collect all available material throwing light on this problem and enlighten us on the comparative efficiency of the two systems. I may, in the meanwhile, give some data which are very revealing.

7. According to a study conducted by the United States Library of Congress, Legislative Reference Service, the rate of growth of industrial output in the Soviet Union during the period 1928-55 was 7.7 per cent per annum compared to 3.6 per cent for the United States in the same period. The relative rates of growth of the Soviet Union and the United States during 1950-55, according to the same study, was 9.9 percent and 4.4 per cent respectively.*

Again, estimates made available by the United Nations indicated that in the 1950's, the overall rate of growth in income in all the Socialist countries taken together was about 8 per cent compared to 4 per cent in the case of the capitalist bloc. The annual rates of growth of the developed market economies (capitalist countries), centrally planned economies (Socialist countries) and the developing countries during 1963-66, as provided in the United Nations World Economic Survey, are shown below :

*United States, Library of Congress, Legislative Reference Service, *Soviet Economic Growth: A comparison with the United States* (A study prepared for the Sub-Committee on Foreign Economic Policy, 85th Congress, 1st Session) Washington, 1957, p.p. 23-24.

World Production : Annual Growth Rates 1963—1966

(Percentage change from preceding year)

Region	1963	1964	1965	1966
Gross Domestic Product at Constant Prices				
Developed Market Economies	5	6	5	5
Centrally Planned Economies	5	8	7	7
Developing Countries	4	5	4	3
Industrial Production				
Developed Market Economies	5	2	6	7
Centrally Planned Economies	7	8	9	8
Developing Countries	6	8	7	8
Agricultural Production				
Developed Market Economies	2	3	—	5
Centrally Planned Economies	—4	11	2	9
Developing Countries	4	2	1	—1

*Source: United Nations, *World Economic Survey, 1966-67*, p. 118

8. A break-up of the figures will show that, but for the poor performance of Czechoslovakia (which was fast moving towards a relapse into capitalism before the intervention by Warsaw Pact countries), the rates of growth in the socialist countries would have been even higher. Even as it is, the average growth rate of the socialist countries has been, in general more impressive than that of the capitalist countries. As for the oft-quoted “exception” of Japan, it is interesting to note that the high average rate of growth of GNP which has attracted so much attention actually conceals the wide cyclical fluctuations over the years, a symptom of the serious malady of capitalism in general. For instance, the GNP of Japan increased only by 5 per cent in 1962 over the previous year. Though the rate of growth in 1963 and 1964 were as high as 12 per cent and 14 per cent respectively, in the next year, 1965, the rate slumped to a low figure of 4 per cent.* In the face of these facts, if somebody says that the ideology of private property is more acceptable, would it be wrong on my part if I consider that such a person is guided purely by “ideological considerations” favourable to the vested interests?

9. The Chief Minister of Orissa is rightly agitated over the “ideological considerations” lying behind the planning process initiated under the late Prime Minister Nehru's leadership. For, it is a fact that the concept of planned economy developed in India out of the impact of Soviet planning on the thinking of the political leadership of the nation. It was then inevitable that planners in India would not share fully the ideology to which the Chief Minister of Orissa and his friends subscribe. That, however, does not mean that Indian planning has been based on the ideology of socialism. On the other hand, Indian planning initiated by the Congress party is based on the very ideology of private property to which the Chief Minister of Orissa and his friends subscribe, even though with some modifications which are not to the liking of the latter. That is why, though they denounce the “ideological considerations”

lying behind the Congress planning, the Chief Minister of Orissa and his friends joined the "consensus" in favour of the Planning Commission's "Approach" document. I, for my part, consider it to be the main source of the weakness of Indian Planning that, though it has taken many of the outer forms and techniques of socialist planning, it has consistently refused to adopt the essence of socialist planning. Even while consulting and taking the advice of the experts from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and adopting some of the techniques of socialist planning, our planners have refused to adopt such socio-economic policies as would help the optimum utilisation of all the natural and human resources of the nation for the most rapid development of the economy. It is this refusal to adopt correct planning policies that lies at the root of the present crisis of planning. My plea therefore is for such a radical change of policies as would make all those inroads into the rights and privileges of the owners of big property which are necessary to enable the optimum use of the natural and human resources of the nation.

10. A look at the history of economic development in the various countries of the world shows that two methods have so far been adopted—methods which may respectfully be called capitalist and socialist. The former secures investible surplus through the appropriation of surplus value generated by the workers and the expropriation of the private property of the small owners—artisans, small and medium cultivators etc.—and the accumulation of property in the hands of big owners. This is the typical process popularly known as "making the rich richer and impoverishing the poor". To this method of internal exploitation, is, of course, added the exploitation of foreign nations which, in one way or another, happen to become subject to the economic or political domination of particular countries. England, for instance, carried out its industrial and agrarian revolutions through the expropriation of the poor both inside the country as well as in such countries as India.

11. The second method is the one adopted first in the Soviet Union and then in the other socialist countries—the method of expropriating the owners of big property, making rational use of this property for the further accumulation of investible property, unleashing the productive enthusiasm of the mass of the working people and so on. There are of course a number of variants for both these methods. But everyone of them can be reduced to either the one or other. The crux of the much-talked-of "ideological considerations" is thus the question: which of these methods is preferable? The plea made by the Chief Minister of Orissa and his friends means that the capitalist method should consistently be adopted without those modifications which have been made by the leadership of the ruling Congress Party. My plea, on the other hand, for a basic change in the method—abandonment of the capitalist and the adoption of the socialist method.

12. The leaders of the ruling Congress Party would have us believe that their method is neither

capitalist nor socialist. They claim to have adopted "a system which has the strong points but not the weaknesses of both". Government control on private property; reasonable terms for tenants rather than abolition of landlordism; nationalisation to the barest minimum possible and with compensation; employer-employee relationship without unduly reducing the profits of the employers etc.—such are the lines along which they would like the property relations to be regulated. All this, it is claimed, would help the country to march along the path of socialism but without going through the sufferings which are inevitable under the "totalitarian" socialist system. It is this so called "third path" which has been tried during the last 18 years of planning and has, according to me, completely failed. The question is whether the political leadership of the nation would draw correct conclusions from this experience and adopt socialist path of planning through which alone can the country get its economy industrialised and all fields of its socio-economic activities modernised. My criticism of the Planning Commission's "Approach" is that this question is not squarely faced.

13. The crucial weakness of our planning has been its dependence on foreign "aid" and loans for the public sector, combined with collaboration in the private sector. This is justified on the ground that our own national resources are inadequate and have to be supplemented by contributions from abroad. The rationale behind the policy apparently is that development with foreign "aid" or collaboration for some time would so strengthen the economy that, after a time, it would be no more necessary to have any assistance. "Dependence in order to end dependence" is the sloganised form of the entire argument.

14. Experience has proved the utter baselessness of this whole approach. After 18 Years of "aid", loans and collaboration, the economy is still in need of more "aid", more loans and more collaborations. The notorious PL 480 "aid" has proved the ever-tightening noose around the neck of our people. The loans which are once contracted have to be repaid with still further loans. As for the collaboration between the foreign and Indian private capitalists, it is becoming the means through which the key sectors of our economy are gradually slipping out of our hands, falling into the iron grip of foreign monopolists. The result of this policy has been that, in the political sphere, our freedom of action is getting more and more restricted; while, in the economic sphere, the burdens on the national economy (by way of interest on and principal of the loans to be repaid) are becoming unbearable. The economic uncertainties and the political humiliation involved in the annual meetings of the so-called "Aid India Club" for fixing the quantum of "aid" for the annual plans are making a mockery of the "independent economy" which is supposed to be developing in the country. This is sharply underlined by the sense of frustration to which expression was given recently by the Deputy Prime Minister after his futile visit to Washington.

15. As against this picture of the so-called "non-totalitarian" India, is the "totalitarian" China which is in many respects comparable with India. The

need for assistance from abroad was as great for China as for India. China did, in fact, receive, in the early years of its planning, assistance from the Soviet Union. This, however, was not in the form of either "grants" and "aids" or collaboration in joint ventures. The bulk of assistance received by China from the Soviet Union was by way of loans repayable according to conditions stipulated. To this of course should be added the free supply of blueprints and designs for the various projects which played a big role in facilitating the development of Chinese economy. China's planned development was thus assisted from abroad by way of technical help (free supply of designs and blueprints, training of Chinese personnel etc.) and repayable loans. The more important point is that whatever assistance China received from the Soviet Union was fully utilised to modernise and develop its domestic economic structure. The Chinese economy got thus developed and the loans taken could be repaid. In fact, even the unilateral decision of the Soviet Union to withdraw all financial and technical assistance to China—a decision which came in the background of the strained relations between the two countries—did not put the Chinese economy out of gear. On the contrary, Chinese economy moved towards complete self-reliance speedier than what many people anticipated. China did, in fact, practise what our planners and political leaders preach—taking assistance from abroad in order to end the need for such assistance.

16. India stands in marked contrast to this. A major part of what is secured by India is in the form of consumer goods or machinery for industries producing consumer goods. "Aids", loans and collaboration are either for importing foodgrains or other consumer goods (many of them goods that are consumed only by the social elite), or for providing for maintenance imports, or for setting up industries which produce consumer goods. The result is that the longer the period in which "aid" continues, the greater is the need for such "aid". The devaluation of the rupee, to which our Government was obliged to resort two years ago, the uncertainty of securing foreign "aid" even after devaluation and the consequent decision to postpone the date of the beginning of the Fourth Five-Year Plan—all this shows that, as opposed to the promise to end the need for foreign "aid" if only we depend on such "aid", for a few years, the practice has been that the noose of foreign "aid" is getting tighter and tighter. The noose has to be broken, the whole policy completely reversed, if the nation is to be saved either politically or economically.

17. This is obviously a question of policy which has to be decided by the political leadership of the nation and not by the experts of the Planning Commission. For, whether the present policy of dependence on foreign "aid" is persisted in, or whether it is ended, in either case certain political consequences follow. If the present policy is persisted in, the Government would have to follow the logical conclusion of more and more succumbing to the pressures of those who give such "aid". On

the other hand, the reversal of the policy and the adoption of a policy of genuine self-reliance, will involve certain radical changes in the methods through which the internal resources are mobilised and efforts made to secure external resource in the form of enhanced export earnings, savings through import substitution, and loans and commercial credits on mutually beneficial terms. If the Government does the former, it will undoubtedly be subjected to criticism from the patriotic citizens of the country who would not like our country to be transformed into a satellite of one or more foreign powers. If on the other hand, the Government adopts the second course then the vested interest both within the country and abroad will mount a concerted offensive against it. In either case, the consequences will be political and the Government will have to meet them politically.

18. Assistance from abroad is however only one form of raising the necessary resources for the planned economy of the nation. More important are the methods of raising internal resources. Here again, the planning process has found itself in a serious crisis—a crisis which is ever more and more deepening. The crisis of internal resources is manifesting itself in that peculiar combination of inflationary conditions in the economy as a whole and recession in several fields of economic activity.

19. The continuously rising prices of all commodities, particularly essential products, has, in fact, put the entire developmental process in India completely out of gear. On the one hand, the vast majority of poor people, fixed wage or salary earners as well as peasants, artisans who find that the prices of consumer goods have increased for more than the prices of their own products, witness a decline in their real incomes and the consequent erosion of whatever additional money incomes they had already received. On the other hand, with higher prices and lower purchasing power, their demand for products of manufactures has dipped, thus contributing to recessionary trends in the industry. Deficit financing to meet the crisis in Government's budgetary resources position, sky-rocketing prices of all products, increasing misery for the vast majority of toiling masses, high cost of production of exportable products leading to our exports being priced out of the international markets and consequent aggravation of foreign exchange difficulties—such are the manifestations of the bankrupt policy of inflationary financing pursued by the Government of India.

20. The experience of the last few years has clearly shown that the problems of recession or periodic slump in demand and supply, a phenomenon so characteristic of developed capitalist countries, is here to stay. Recession in the engineering industries as well as many other fields of economic activity in India is a reflection of the increasing maturity of Indian capitalism and the deepening crisis in the economic system. High prices of foodgrains even in an year of bumper crop; shortages and high prices of consumer goods in general; whole groups of industries (like engineering and textiles) feeling the impact of a serious recession, with scores of factories

and mills closed and tens of thousands of workers thrown out, engineering and other professional colleges being obliged to reduce their intake of trainees even when their out-turn in terms of trained manpower is behind the requirements as had been envisaged in the Perspective Manpower Planning, the number of employment-seeking men and women increasing every year—such are the indications of the basic malady which effects the system—a malady which cannot be associated solely with the so-called problem of foreign exchange and foreign “aid”. This should make every serious student of economic affairs ponder over the question: what is wrong with our economy? It is however precisely this question that is studiously avoided in the Planning Commission’s “Approach” document.

21. The Government of India and the Planning Commission are totally oblivious of the profound economic crisis which is enveloping the international capitalist system. Their expectations of increased trade with Western nations, and loans and grants from these countries, are based on inadequate and faulty ideas about the real nature of the world economic crisis. The increasing gap between the income levels of the advanced capitalist countries and the under-developed nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the continued obstinacy of the advanced countries to relax the onerous conditions in their trading practices and to show a better dispensation to the problems of the developing countries, etc., are problems to be taken serious note of. It will be a folly to work out a strategy of economic development for India based on the so-called “benevolent dispensation” of the advanced capitalist countries. Unless a major departure is made from our present commitments to the international monetary agencies such as the World Bank and IMF and get out of their entanglements, there is the real danger that the Indian economy will continue to be dangerously linked with the crumbling edifice of the trade and payments mechanism of world capitalism.

22. I have stated above that the crisis in the Plan, according to me, is a crisis of the so-called “third path” which the leadership of the ruling Congress Party adopted after Independence. It is necessary at this stage to mention that the path and consequently the policies do not cover merely the economic aspect but embrace foreign political relations and such internal political questions as Centre-State relations, the language problem, the communal question and so on. For, the way in which these foreign and internal questions are dealt with affects the political basis on which the plans of economic development are formulated and implemented. The critique of present policies and the advocacy of alternate policies attempted in the following pages therefore embrace all these aspects.

23. Let us begin with the foreign policy of peace and non-alignment. This is supposed to be a unique contribution which India made to international politics at a time when the world was divided into two armed camps—those of capitalism and socialism. This was claimed to be in our national interests since it will make India a friend of all but enemy of none.

After twenty years of pursuing this policy, we find ourselves in a position where we advocate peace in the world but are having relations of hostility with two of our neighbours. Our leaders in the ruling and most of the Opposition parties have so adapted themselves to the strained relations with these two neighbours that they judge every country in the world from the point of view of whether it supports us in our struggle against these two neighbours. For is it a question of mere political relation between us and our neighbours? It affects the planned development of our economy in that:—

(a) The absence of normal political relations with these two neighbouring countries creates so many problems of imports and exports of such commodities as can find natural markets within this region. To mention only a few of such problems, Pakistan could very well supply us foodgrains and raw-materials to industries like jute; it could also be a natural outlet for several of our industrial products, the timber and fruit of Kashmir could very well be marketed in Pakistan and fetch much better prices than now. Normal relations with China too could improve the chances of supply of commodities essential for us, as well as market for our products.

(b) The strained relations with our two neighbours have made it necessary for us to utilise a sizable proportion of our resources to maintain a relatively huge army—resources which could well have been spent for productive purposes if the relations were normal. No effort however has been made to bring these relations back to normalcy.

24. It is not proposed here, nor it is possible, to state precisely how the relations can be normalised. These are undoubtedly difficult problems. Solutions for these problems can be found only through a detailed examination by ourselves and through continuous contact and exchanges with the leaders of the two neighbouring countries. It can however be definitely stated that the relations with the two neighbouring countries cannot be normalised unless our political leadership (both in the ruling as well as in most of the Opposition parties) abandon the rigid position which they have adopted and still continue to adopt. Flexibility of approach in dealing with the problems and a will to settle them on the basis of mutual accommodation are the essence of the policy of peace in the world. This is what our leaders had advocated in the matter of solving the problem of mutual relations between the capitalist and the socialist camps. Unfortunately, however, this basic approach which is the essence of the policy of peace is lacking in our approach to Pakistan and China. That is why our relations with the neighbouring countries have continued to be strained. (It is not suggested that, as soon as we abandon our rigid positions and adopt a more flexible policy, relations with the neighbouring countries will improve. One cannot rule out the possibility that, even after we adopt a more flexible policy, the neighbouring States continue to adopt rigid positions. It is however obvious that there will be no improvement in the situation unless we adopt a flexible attitude).

25. As for non-alignment, though in the formal sense we are not militarily allied to any of the military blocs, we are under terrific pressure from the capitalist bloc to which we very often succumb. The most notable evidence of this is that, while we have full diplomatic relations with West Germany, we refuse to have such relations with East Germany. Whenever suggestions are made that we should recognise both the German States, threats come not only from West Germany but her allies in the Western bloc and, instead of standing up to these threats, we succumb to them. There are ever so many other instances of orientation towards the West which is only partly offset by friendly relations with many of the socialist countries, particularly with the Soviet Union. This too has a direct impact on, and is in its turn influenced by, the economic relations that are steadily being built up with the Western world. The "aids" and loans from the Western governments and semi-Governmental agencies, together with the ever-increasing agreements and collaboration between the Western and Indian private capitalists, lead to the ever-strengthening bonds between India and the Western world. The United States administration, the World Bank, the "Aid India Club" and the Western private capitalists who have entered into collaboration agreements with their counter-parts have all become so many agencies through which non-alignment is steadily eroded into and alignment which the West gets strengthened.

26. For some time after the policy of non-alignment was laid down, it appeared as if that policy was paying dividends—economically as well as politically. Non-alignment made the major countries of both the capitalist and socialist camps our friends, we could get assistance by way of "aids" and loans from both the camps. The Second and Third Five-Years Plans were particularly noted for the implementation of several projects with such assistance from the two camps. Politically too, it appeared as if non-alignment helped us in our struggle with Pakistan, since we could use the Soviet Union against the Western powers on the disputed question of Kashmir. Later on, when our relations with China began to deteriorate, we could use both the Western camp and the Communist powers headed by the Soviet Union against China. All this however proved a complete delusion. After several years of non-alignment, it has now been proved that (as had already been briefly outlined), foreign aid has not made our economy self-reliant. Politically too, friendship with the Western and Socialist camp has not helped in achieving the declared objective of policy in relation to Pakistan and China. Peace and non-alignment as practiced so far have thus been proved an utter failure.

27. Real non-alignment (which should mean complete independence in foreign political relations) is inseparably connected with the building up of a completely self-reliant economy. Technical assistance is of course necessary for a backward country like ours. Even financial assistance in limited quantities and for limited periods need not be ruled out. Both of them can be made available on relatively easy

commercial terms if the political relations with foreign countries are friendly. This is all the more true of the present situations in the world in which several powers (both in the capitalist and socialist camps) are trying to forge relations of friendship and co-operation with developing countries. These opportunities however can be utilised in national interests only if the political and Governmental leaders are vigilant and zealous of the sovereignty of the nation. "Aids" and loans on terms which may appear attractive if looked at superficially can be very deceptive. This has been the experience of many countries in the post-second-World War period. Our own experience is not different. PL 480, World Bank loans, etc. have been of this nature. Any hesitation to put an end to these (economically disastrous and politically humiliating) agreements would lead us into worse crises than we have so far experienced. Abandonment of this policy is thus an essential pre-requisite for building a self-reliant economy and pursuing a policy of genuine independence and non-alignment.

28. Equally important is the reversal of the policy which facilitates the entry of foreign private capital into our economy. During the days of our struggle for national freedom, we had realised how the British capitalists who had entrenched themselves in decisive fields of economic activity were as powerful as the British military and Civil Service personnel. After the attainment of independence, however, the domination of the British private capitalists was not ended but supplemented by private capitalists from other countries. The danger which this may constitute has been formally realised with the result that some legal provisions have been made putting restrictions on the participation of foreign capitalists in Indian business concerns (such as the provision that no Indian business concerns should have more than 49 per cent participation by the foreign collaborator). This however has been nothing but a formality. Foreign private monopolists are coming in large numbers and entering into partnership agreements with Indian private capitalists. This is becoming a serious threat to the economic and political independence of the nation. The unrestricted right of the foreign investor to export profits and even to repatriate the invested capital is proving a source of such an annual drain of wealth that much more is taken every year from the country by way of profits and capital than is brought into it by way of fresh capital. Added to this economic drain is the fact that the close collaboration between the foreign and Indian private capitalists is creating new vested interests which may well develop into a serious threat to the political independence of the country.

29. These dangers to the economy and political independence of the country can be averted and the country made fully self-reliant only by a well-organised plan of increasing production, organising the rational distribution of the wealth that is produced, eliminating wastages and raising the level of savings, so organising the import and export trade as to conserve foreign exchange to the utmost, etc. Such a well-organised plan alone will eliminate the need

for foreign "aid", help the payment of all those debts that have to be incurred in the process of planning. The absence of such a plan is the basic weakness which has led to the fiasco of the planning process.

30. The evolution of such a plan raises extremely important questions of policy. Issues of an economic and political character arise and have to be settled. On a correct solution of these issues depends whether optimum use is being made of the material and human resources of the nation. It is therefore proposed in the following paragraphs to examine some of these issues.

31. The question of increasing production is connected with what is usually called proper "incentives" to the producer. Everybody will agree that production cannot be increased unless the producer is satisfied that he will be rewarded for the additional efforts that he has to make in increasing production. This, in fact, is the ground on which tax rebates, price fixation and other "incentives" are given to the industrialists, landlords etc. The policy pursued so far in this direction is, according to me, seriously defective in that it is not the actual producer—the worker, the working peasant and so on—who is given the incentive. This mass of real producers are, on the other hand, so dealt with by the Government that not only do they have no positive "incentive" to production but there are large numbers of "disincentives" in their case. It is therefore necessary to make a thorough review of, and completely overhaul, all those policies which are connected with the question of incentives for the producer—policies connected with land reforms, rural and community development, prices, taxation, labour relations and so on. On everyone of these questions, it is submitted here, the policies are such that they become disincentives to the mass of real producers, while innumerable incentives are given to the landlord-capitalist classes.

32. Take for instance, land reforms. It is true that various intermediaries on land—those who stand between the State and the actual cultivator—have been removed. But, in the process, large numbers of actual cultivators have been turned out of the land in order to accommodate those intermediaries who have been transformed into "cultivators". The result of this transformation is that many of those who were tenant cultivators before the reform have become landless wage labourers; while rent-receiving landlords have become "farmers" who get their lands cultivated through wage labour. Another consequence of the land reform is that the intermediaries whose rights have been abolished have received huge amounts as "compensation" and its burden put on the shoulders of the cultivators. All this has of course given big "incentives" to a section of the land-owning classes—those who were either landlords or well-to-do tenant cultivators—and made their production more efficient. In the process, however, a much bigger proportion of tenant cultivators have their living conditions further worsened and in their case the land reforms have proved to be a disincentive.

33. This is true of the various schemes of rural and community development as well. The claim being made for these schemes is that it is bringing about a "silent revolution" in the countryside. This is true to the extent that the various strata of landlords and rich peasants are helped to improve their technique of production, raise the productivity of their land and thus to make their farms more and more profitable. The new technology based on the high-yielding varieties of seeds, use of an abundant quantity of fertilisers, pesticides and so on (all of which is helped by the provision of credit, subsidy for securing agricultural machinery and other materials etc.) is by and large confined to the categories of "large" and "big" cultivators. The "middle" and "poor" peasants (who constitute the bulk) are unable to take advantage of all the facilities that are provided for improving the technique of cultivation and raising the level of production. The natural consequence of the "new technology" is that the gulf between the rich and the poor in the villages (which has already been widened by the character of land reforms indicated above) is still further widened.

34. Coming to the non-agricultural and urban sectors of the economy too, it can be easily seen that the whole system of regulating foreign and internal trade (import controls, export promotion, industrial licencing, control on movements, price fixation and so on) are all so operated that a narrow stratum of well-to-do businessmen, who can pull strings at the political and administrative levels, can secure all the benefits accruing from these measures. The unscrupulous businessmen with their "contacts" at the appropriate levels can defeat all the elaborate rules and regulations which are supposed to have been framed to control their activities, while honest businessmen and the large mass of consumers are made to pay the enormous cost of upkeep for this elaborate machinery. Regulation of and control on the profiteering activities of the trader and the industrialist are, in other words, being utilised by those very traders and industrialists to still further profiteer at the expense of the common people. The disastrous consequences of these activities are felt not only by the mass of the working people but even by the well-to-do cultivator, medium scale trader and the industrialist and the upper middle class professional. It is the height of cynicism to give such a policy the name giving "incentives to the producer".

35. It is when we come to the question of mobilising the resources for the Plan that we see the totally unrealistic character of the policies pursued by the ruling party. The Communist Party and other Left democratic organisations have made several suggestions for augmenting the resources for the Plan, such as prohibition of the export of capital, putting a ceiling on profits, utilisation of the surplus above the ceiling to form a national development fund, nationalisation of the major sectors of economy including foreign trade and wholesale trade in food-grains and so on. All these measures would not only augment the financial resources of the Government for implementing the Plan but will help it in regulating the economy in the national interest. They

would help the Government to exercise control over what are called "commanding heights of the economy." These proposals, however, have been consistently opposed by the Government. The result is that, while the Government is deprived of the financial resources that can be utilised for the Plan, foreign and Indian big businessmen are able to exercise control over the entire field of national economy. Using their control over the "commanding heights" of the economy, they sabotage all the measures which, if properly implemented, would reduce profiteering to the minimum.

36. Coming to taxation proper, the policy pursued is such as to give big reliefs and rebates to the big businessmen who in any case is able to resort to various forms of tax evasion. At the same time, the large mass of poor and medium-scale tax payers and the common people have to bear the ever-increasing burden of indirect taxation and deficit financing. The ever-rising spiral of prices (which are the inevitable consequences of deficit financing and heavy indirect taxation) has raised several socio-political problems arising out of the natural demand of workers and employees for Dearness Allowance which is resisted by the employers. What may well be called an "explosive situation" has thus arisen not only in the employer-employee relations in general but in the relations between the Central and State Governments on the one hand and their employees on the other. The Central Government employees' strike of 1960 and the subsequent developments in the relations between the Central and State Governments and their employees have now reached a stage when several State-wide strikes have already taken place and a one-day token strike of Central Government employees has also materialised. The manner in which the Central Government has dealt with the problem has, in its turn, raised very difficult problems of Centre-State relations. While the Central Government itself recognises the need for conceding the demands of its employees, it refuses to help the State Governments in conceding the demands of their employees. This is resented by all (including Congress) State Governments. As for such State Governments as do not see eye-to-eye with the Centre on the issue of employees' demands the threats held out against the Kerala Government show the "explosive" political implications of the policy.

37. Not only on the question of prices and demands for Dearness Allowance but on several other questions of employer-employee relations, the policy pursued has been that of making the mass of workers and employees thoroughly discontented. The workers and employees see from day to day how the employers are able to get their ever-increasing demands accepted by the Government. On the other hand, the demands of workers and employees are not only not accepted, but their organisations, agitations and struggles are treated with hostility. The machinery for conciliation, adjudication and arbitration of employer-employee disputes is heavily weighted in favour of the employers. The employers who refuse to abide by the directions and decisions of the Labour Department are allowed to go scot-free, while the whole

force of the Government is brought on the heads of the workers and employees whenever they resort to agitations and struggles. The large number of strikes which have of late taken place in the various industries (including the latest lockout in the newspaper industry) show the determination of the employers to crush the employees' movement and the helplessness (if not worse) of the Government in this respect. It is obvious that, if this continues, the declared objective of maintaining production without interruption and increasing productivity will be defeated. For, production cannot continue uninterruptedly unless the relations between the employers and employees are smooth and cordial. Such cordial relations can be expected only if labour is given an increasing share in ownership and management of industries.

38. I have so far referred to certain aspects of economic policies. The economic policy, however, does not stand in isolation from political policy. After all, the main tasks in the economic sphere—augmenting production, organising proper distribution, avoiding wastage and extravagance etc.—are all tasks which can be performed only if there is perfect coordination of the activities of the Government and the people. Enthusiastic work for augmenting production; the spirit of service and sacrifice which is the inevitable prerequisite for avoiding wastage and extravagance; the patriotic and public-spirited work which alone will help the elimination of corruption, black marketing and so on—all this requires a basic understanding between the people and the Government, making the people feel that the Plan which the Government is carrying out is their (people's) own Plan. In the absence of such an atmosphere of co-operation between the people and the Government, the so-called "people's participation" in, "popular contributions" for, the implementation of the Plan have been turned into a farce. The formal and routinised "people's cooperation", organised through the District Development Councils, Block Development Committees, Bharat Sevak Samaj etc., have all become at best new cogs in the wheel of bureaucracy and at worst the mechanism through which sections of vested interests can carry on their nefarious activities.

39. The main obstacle in the way of evoking the enthusiasm of the common people in the planning process is the narrowly partisan way in which the ruling Congress Party has dealt with the people in general and the Opposition parties in particular. Disregarding the incontrovertible truth that the Congress is only one of the political parties in the country (though, of course, the biggest), its leaders behave as if they constitute the nation. The steady erosion into the prestige and authority which they had at one time enjoyed among the people (as is evidenced by the slow and steady fall in the electoral strength of the ruling Congress Party) is sought to be compensated for by vicious attacks on those sections of organised public opinion which are developing into serious threats to the continued domination of the Congress Party. The unscrupulous way in which the results of the first, second, third and fourth

General Elections were dealt with by the Central Congress Government ; the opportunistic alliances and the use of the Central Government's authority in order to prevent the formation of non-Congress Governments and to topple them when they get formed ; the scandalous use of Preventive Detention Act and Defence of India Rules against Opposition parties—all this has created an impenetrable barrier for genuine cooperation between the people and the Government.

40. Political relations, however, do not remain confined to relations between the ruling and Opposition parties. Equally, if not more, important are the relations between the various linguistic groups in the country as well as between the various castes, religious communities and tribes which constitute Indian society. Here again, the policy pursued by the Central Congress leadership and the Central Congress Government has been so unrealistic that the louder they talk of "national integration", the more complicated the problems that threaten the unity of India. It is enough to make a mere mention of the problems of official language ; the constitutional status of Kashmir ; the strained relations that have been continuing between the Centre on the one hand

and such sections of the people as the Nagas, Mizos, Assam Hill Tribes etc. ; the ever-increasing demands of all the State Governments (including the Congress-governed State Governments) for greater power and greater financial resources ; the ever-recurring and serious communal riots and caste conflicts ; and so on. One would then see that, unless something radically new is done, the unity of India (in the name of which the leaders of the ruling Congress Party always talk) will be broken. The truth is that it is the forces of disintegration, rather than of integration, that are growing.

41. What I have attempted here is a critique of the basic policies on which the ruling Congress Party has built up the whole edifice of planning. It is obvious that, if the weakness and difficulties revealed in the process of planning have to be removed, the present policies have to be replaced by other policies. What the policies should be, have been elaborated by the Seminar on "Alternate Policies for the Fourth Five Year Plan", the main conclusions of which are presented in a separate paper.

It is for the acceptance of such an alternate set of policies that I am pleading.

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ASP/UCO-9/68

An Outline of Alternate Policies for Fourth Five Year Plan

A four-day Seminar on "Alternate Fourth Plan Policies" was held under the auspices of the Kerala State Planning Board at Trivandrum during October 9—12, 1968. The State Planning Board was fortunate in having the participation, in this Seminar, of a good cross-section of economists and specialists drawn from the various centres in India. A list of contributors of papers and participants in the Seminar is given in Annexure.

The general consensus of the Seminar was that planning in India so far has been full of contradictions which are maturing into a crisis. On the basis of a detailed and critical examination of existing policies and programmes, the Seminar arrived at certain conclusions regarding alternate policies which are listed herebelow. (This is the document referred to by Sri EMS Namboodiripad in his paper, "Towards An Alternate Policy Framework for Fourth Five Year Plan," appearing elsewhere in this issue of Mainstream.)

I. FOREIGN POLICY

1. Take positive steps for the normalisation of relations with Pakistan and China. End the policy of reliance either on the Western Powers or on the Soviet Union for diplomatic and military aid and co-operation as against Pakistan and China.

2. Pursue an independent foreign policy and take such concrete measures as recognition of the German Democratic Republic, stoppage of the supply of war-materials to South Vietnam, and establishment of normal relations with Cuba, North Vietnam, NLF of South Vietnam and North Korea.

3. Establish a common front with all those Governments in Asia, Africa and Latin America that are following a resolutely independent and anti-imperialist foreign policy.

4. Give diplomatic and other support to all freedom loving nations and peoples of the world in their struggle against imperialism. Full support to the fighting people of Vietnam, the African peoples, and so on.

II. SELF-RELIANCE AND FOREIGN AID

1. Stop all forms of foreign economic 'aid' (e.g. PL. 480, World Bank Loans, US AID Loans, etc.) that infringe on national freedom and also impede economic growth in the country. Negotiate fresh agreements with all countries for supplies of technical

know-how and capital goods on reasonable commercial terms.

2. Attempt should be made for cent-per-cent Indianization of know-how in all its forms. Immediate steps for improving the existing know-how. Design and engineering work should be done completely by our personnel. No foreign consultant should be employed in these fields. Erection and commissioning of plants should be entirely the work of Indian personnel.

III. PRIVATE FOREIGN CAPITAL AND FOREIGN COLLABORATION

1. Cancel all agreements of non-financial collaboration between the Indian and foreign monopolists. Foreign financial collaborators must be divested of all controlling powers immediately, while negotiations are made for gradual repayment of their actual financial contribution which should be assessed, not at the existing book values, but according to some more realistic and plausible criteria.

2. Declare a moratorium on exports of profits and repatriation of foreign private capital, while negotiating for rescheduling repayments for past loans, foreign private capital and also for reduction in the interest rates of loans. The repayments should start immediately and be made through additional exports (i.e. in excess of the 'normal' value) fixed on the basis of a 10 or 15 year bilateral trade and payments agreement with each of our creditor nations.

3. Withdraw from the International Patents Convention and make all technical know-how available inside the country accessible to all on the payment of a relatively small fee to a central agency which shall be the repository of all know-how purchased from abroad or developed in publicly owned research laboratories.

4. Reshape the structure of new investments so that indigenous technical know-how, capital equipment and raw materials are utilised to the maximum possible extent.

5. Enforce a complete ban on import of consultancy services and on projects handled by the foreigners on a turn-key basis.

6. Enforce a complete ban on the exports of surplus capital by the Indian monopolists in the form of "joint ventures", etc.

7. Technical assistance to less developed countries, may however, be given on Government-to-Government basis for strengthening the public-sector industries in these countries.

MOBILISATION OF RESOURCES FOR THE PLAN

Since the above measures in the field of foreign policy, foreign aid and private foreign capital will be resisted by the capitalist powers who would do their utmost to starve us of the resources for development, it is necessary to conserve and mobilise all the available resources in the country and to this end the Government has to take the following measures :

IV. EXPORT AND IMPORT POLICY

1. Nationalise import and export trade and all other transactions with foreign countries.

2. Minimize import costs by purchasing from the cheapest possible source (with due regard to the availability of the particular foreign exchange) and by forcing through a policy of rapid and all-round import substitution. Substitute imported raw-materials by Indian ones by enforcing a "forced crisis", if necessary.

3. Requisition for exports a part of the domestic supply of all non-essential and non-priority goods for which there is a foreign demand.

4. Develop bilateral and multilateral trade relations, if necessary on terms of deferred payments, with all the newly independent countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Special emphasis should be placed on trade with China and Pakistan. Wherever feasible mutually beneficial long-term trade agreements should be drawn up with these and all other countries.

5. Desist from cut-throat competition with other under-developed countries, particularly in regard to commodities for which world market prices tend to fall.

V. DOMESTIC RESOURCES MOBILISATION

General :

1. Stop the payment of privy purses to princes

and compensation to big landlords and zemindars.

2. Imposition of a ceiling on profits of all big industrial and commercial undertakings owned by Indian businessmen.

3. Take over the profits in excess of the ceiling as compulsory loan.

4. Creation of a National Development Pool out of the compulsory loans formed out of the excess profits and the reserves of big companies. Use this pool for investment in the public sector in accordance with national interests.

5. Drastic review of the system of subsidies with a view to re-orient the policy to help the medium and small industries and middle and small peasants.

6. Redesign the pricing policies of the public undertakings with a view to help the final consumers rather than the monopoly capital and U-Sector industries.

7. End the policy of prohibition.

8. End the policy of encouragement to Khadi Village Industries and other items of Sarvodaya work which lead to avoidable waste.

9. End deficit financing.

10. Rigorous tax enforcement and deterrent punishments to tax evaders and corrupt officers.

Rural Taxation :

1. Replace the regressive land revenue system by a graduated tax on the capital value of land.

2. Reduce inequalities in income through a steeply progressive agricultural income-tax on the estates and Plantations.

3. Impose a progressive system of levy on food-grains output.

Urban Taxation :

1. Impose a steeply graduated personal income-tax.

2. Impose prohibitive taxes on luxuries and comforts to discourage conspicuous consumption.

3. Exempt basic necessities from taxation and subsidise them if necessary.

4. Impose heavier taxes on corporate profits, personal wealth, estates and on capital gains.

Economy in Expenditure :

1. Review administrative expenditure at all levels with a view to trim the top heaviness and strengthen administration at the cutting edge (or grass roots)

2. Drastic reduction in public expenditure. Cut the salaries and allowances of highly-paid officials, Ministers, M.Ps. and M.L.A.'s etc., as well as costly and luxurious buildings and other amenities for their residences and offices.

3. Cut defence expenditure by 10 per cent a year and put a ceiling at 3 per cent of National Income. Use the defence forces for peaceful purposes such as digging of canals and for construction of minor irrigation, roads, schools etc.

VI. CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS

1. Revise the Constitution in such a way as to make India a real Federal State. The Centre to have only minimum functions, powers and resources, with the bulk of the powers and financial resources vested with the Centre now to be transferred to the States' pool.

2. Awaiting the revision, re-formulation of the Centre-State relations in respect of resource-allocation and mobilisation should begin immediately, consistent with the requirements of centralised investment decisions (through National Development Council or other suitable institutions) on the one hand, and of ensuring the different States adequate financial resources to meet their Plan needs on the other.

VII. REGIONAL IMBALANCES

1. The Industrial Licensing Policy of the Government should be directed in such a way that private-sector investments are channeled to less developed regions with a view to reducing regional imbalances.

2. In deciding the location of Central Sector investments the Government of India and the Planning Commission should not be guided merely by the static concepts of locational principles; the location of such projects should, as far as possible, be used as a lever for reducing regional imbalance even if it means a slight deviation from optimality at the national level.

VIII. INDUSTRIAL POLICY

Control over monopoly and concentration

1. Energetic and suitable measures must be taken to break the monopolies and prevent their growth.

- (a) All big enterprises owned or controlled by any of the 75 monopoly houses listed by the Monopoly Enquiry Commission should be immediately nationalised. A National Corporation for each industrial sector should be set up for managing all nationalised firms within the sector.
- (b) Individual monopoly houses may be allowed to hold companies, the assets of which do not exceed a certain limit to be specified (in conformity with the policy of abolition of big business).
- (c) Encouragement to medium and small-scale entrepreneurs and industrial co-operatives. Facilities for those who are trained in the technical institutions to set up their own small scale units.
- (d) Assistance by the Central Government to the State Governments for taking over factories and mills closed or are threatening closure, and to work them as public sector undertakings.
- (e) The public financial institutions that give loans to small and medium scale industries should ensure greater public control over these industries.

2. Nationalisation of Banking, General Insurance, Aluminium industry, Manganese, Copper, Iron and Coal mining as well as British-controlled Jute Mills and Plantations.

3. All new undertakings in basic industry should be in the public sector.

4. Certain essential consumer goods industries and trade and distribution in all kinds of consumer and producer goods should increasingly fall within the public sector under the Central as well as the State Governments.

5. For management cadre either in the private or public sector there should be a new national pay scale (both in money and in kind) laid down by the Parliament. The new scales must drastically reduce the remuneration currently received by the higher cadre.

6. The policy of rapid industrialisation must be continued with adequate emphasis on all products, old and new, that form the base of such industrial advance. Through a forward planning on future technology in regard to supply of raw materials and capital goods, the new industrial sector must depend on the country's own resources to the maximum possible extent.

7. Measures for correcting short-term imbalances must be in conformity with the long-term perspective. Any short fall due to the deliberate policy, or inefficiency of the private sector must be made good by the creation of corresponding or near capacity in the public sector (*eg.* Fertilisers).

IX. LABOUR POLICY

1. Ensure employment and minimum wages to the working class. Interim relief to unemployed workers and employees. No wage freeze or deferred payment. Full neutralisation for increased cost of living.

2. Speedy implementation of various schemes of social insurance and housing for the progress of employees.

3. Democratisation of the entire management of the public-sector undertakings and the nationalised concerns of big business, both Indian and foreign. It will ensure creative participation of workers and trade unions in the management and running of these concerns.

4. Compulsory recognition of trade unions and their right of collective bargaining by the management.

5. Provision of adequate machinery to settle all the grievances of the workers at plant level. Recognition of workers' right to strike in support of their demands.

6. Creation of suitable machinery for fixing the need-based national minimum wage for the entire working class and for ensuring its implementation by all the employers.

7. Measures should be taken for a continuous rise in the standard of living of the working class. Fixation of wage differentials on a national basis.

8. Effective steps to improve the working conditions inside the factories. Immediate implementation of all safety measures by all the managements.

9. Social security schemes should be non-contributory for the workers. The entire expenses of the scheme should be paid by the State and the employers.

The Provident Fund to be replaced by a new "old age pension scheme".

10. Implementation of a massive programme of housing for all the industrial workers. Whenever a new factory is started the management must provide residential accommodation for all its employees.

11. Top priority should be given to ensure workers' right to work. A nation-wide programme to be prepared to ensure jobs for all workers in a specific period. Pending its full implementation some maintenance allowance should be given to a worker who is without job.

12. Recognition of the principle of equal pay for equal work. No differentiation in wages of men and women.

13. Full facilities for craftsmanship training for the young workers.

14. Full trade union rights to Police and Government Employees.

15. Steps to ensure democratic functioning of trade unions. Consultations with trade unions at all levels while chalking out Government's policy concerning labour matters.

X. AGRICULTURE AND LAND REFORMS

1. Immediate stoppage of all evictions. Steps should be taken towards the consolidation of records of rights for all individual households so that it can be computerised and published.

2. Then throw open these consolidated statement of the record of rights for every village before the Grama Sabha, with legal provisions safeguarding the right of any member of the Grama Sabha to challenge the statement on the total land owned by a family.

3. Any such dispute and the ceiling for a particular family's total holding, to be settled by a Land Commission elected by the Grama Sabha, enjoying statutory powers, with majority representation for the poor peasants and agricultural labourers.

4. Distribute all cultivable waste lands to landless labourers followed by co-operativisation in appropriate forms.

5. All debts of landless and poor peasants should be annulled. For appropriate measures in this respect the legislation of the thirties in Bengal may be referred to.

6. The strategy for increasing agricultural production, while being guided by technological considerations, should at the same time be linked with measures against concentration of prosperity in select pockets.

7. Adequate wages and humane conditions of service to agricultural labourers.

8. Poor and middle peasants to be provided with such facilities as irrigation, water, better seeds fertilisers and pesticides etc.

9. Supply of producers' and consumers' goods to peasants at cheap rates and guarantee of fair prices their products.

XI. NATIONAL FOOD POLICY

1. Monopoly procurement of the entire surplus from big land-holders.

2. More or less uniform procurement prices throughout India, fixed at the rates available to actual cultivators at the time of harvest.

3. State Monopoly of wholesale trade in food-grains.

4. Equitable distribution by statutory rationing in urban areas and industrial centres and by assuring adequate supplies in rural areas.

5. Effective action (including deterrent punishments) against hoarders, blackmarketers and profiteers.

6. Peoples' Committees for dehoarding and for equitable distribution.

7. Import of foodgrains only on commercial terms.

XII. EDUCATION

General Education

1. Education to be an instrument of social change.

2. Crash programme for primary education. A campaign against illiteracy should form a part of primary education. The services of secondary school students and undergraduates may be enlisted for such a campaign as a first step.

3. Polytechnicalisation or vocationalisation of school education from bottom to top on a phased programme. Instead of the system of basic education which is linked up with crude crafts, a system linking up the technical institutions like the Junior Technical Schools, Polytechnics etc. with secondary schools around them for a programme of work-experience may be adopted.

4. Revision of syllabus with a view to make it up-to-date with better emphasis on science and socialist values.

5. Transformation of the pre-degree course to suit class-room teaching of the Secondary School.

6. Declaration of the Higher Secondary School course (10+2 or 11+1) to be terminal and also to be the maximum general qualification required for Services.

7. Creation of Local Education Authorities to take care of the quality of education and also to canvass public co-operation.

8. Adoption of mother tongue as medium of instruction.

9. Institution of merit-cum-means scholarship or concessions.

University Education

1. Admission on the basis of merit and not on the economic standing of the candidate.

2. Rationalisation of post-graduate study and Research under the Universities and Colleges. A Board of Research and Post-graduate Studies may be created in every state.

3. Adoption of mother tongue as medium of instruction at degree level on a phased programme.

4. Encouragement of degree holders and diploma holders in engineering technology to form their own production units on co-operative basis or otherwise.

5. University community should be encouraged to associate itself with the planning processes.

XIII. DEMOCRACY AND PEOPLE'S

CO-OPERATION

1. Cancel all legislations and executive orders which curb the right of the people to organise, hold meetings and demonstrations, etc.

2. Drastically revise the Police Act and rules with a view to curtailing the powers of the police to arrest, shoot, lathi-charge and ban meetings and processions. Bring the activities of district and local police officers under the control of elected administrative organs at the corresponding levels.

3. The Army should not be used for suppressing the class struggles and the various struggles of the masses of the people.

4. Revise the legislations and executive orders connected with the Co-operative Movement, Rural and Community Development, Panchayats, and Panchayati Raj etc. in such a way that the possibilities of their being dominated by narrow stratum of rural society is eliminated and the mass of poor and middle peasants, artisans, agricultural labourers and so on, get adequate share of the benefits accruing from these activities.

5. End the policy of putting obstacles in the way of Opposition parties and non-Congress Governments. Give them full freedom of action.

6. Revise the Constitution in such a way that radical socio-economic legislations are not challenged in courts of law.

7. Decentralise powers from the State to district and lower levels under a system of elected administrative organs at all levels.

XIV. NATIONAL INTEGRATION

1. A national and democratic language policy consisting of the immediate replacement of English by the regional language as the official language and medium of instruction; complete equality of all the regional languages with none of them being considered as a superior 'national' language; the question of link language to be decided after the replacement of the English by the regional languages and with the willing consent of all the linguistic groups in the country.

2. Democratic solution for the problem of border States and areas (such as Kashmir, Nagaland, Mizoland, Assam Hill States, etc.) on the basis of maximum autonomy for the States and minimum power for the Centre.

3. Regional autonomy and other safeguards for all the tribal peoples.

4. Energetic measures to eliminate all traces of caste domination. Observance of caste rules involving caste superiority and inferiority to be made a punishable offence. Encouragement to inter-caste marriages.

5. The principle of secularism should be put into practice. No mixing up of religion and the State. The freedom given to all religious groups to believe in and practice their faiths to be extended to non-

believers also. The practice of associating public and official functions with religious ceremonies to be strictly forbidden (not only because such ceremonies are repugnant to non-believers but because the ceremonies of a particular religious group very often offend the sentiments of other religious groups).

6. Firm action against those who incite caste and communal rivalries and indulge in riots.

ANNEXURE

List of contributors of Paper and Participants

1. Sri E.M.S. Namboodiripad
2. Dr K.N. Raj
3. Dr B.V. Krishnamurthy
4. Dr A.R. Desai
5. Prof V.Y. Kolhatkar
6. Prof A.R. Kamat
7. Dr Amalendu Guha
8. Dr Boudhayan Chattopadhyay
9. Dr Barun De
10. Dr Paresh Chattopadhyay
11. Dr Nirmal K. Chandra
12. Sri Asok Sen
13. Sri Ajit Roy
14. Prof N.S. Ramaswamy
15. Sri. M.N.V. Nair
16. P.V.S. Namboodiripad
17. Dr. Amit Bhaduri
18. M.K. Pandhe
19. Dr. S. Ganguli
20. Dr Suhash Chakravarthi
21. Sri Aurobindo Ghose
22. Sri Aravind Vyas
23. Sri Aswini K. Roy
24. St R.A. Menon
25. Sri K.P. Subramania Menon
26. Sri P. Govinda Pillai
27. Dr P.A. Nair
28. Prof Joseph Mundassery
29. Sri T.P. Kuttiammu
30. Dr P.K. Gopalakrishnan
31. Dr Jacob Eapen
32. Prof K.S. Lakshmana Panicker
33. Dr K. Mathew Kurian

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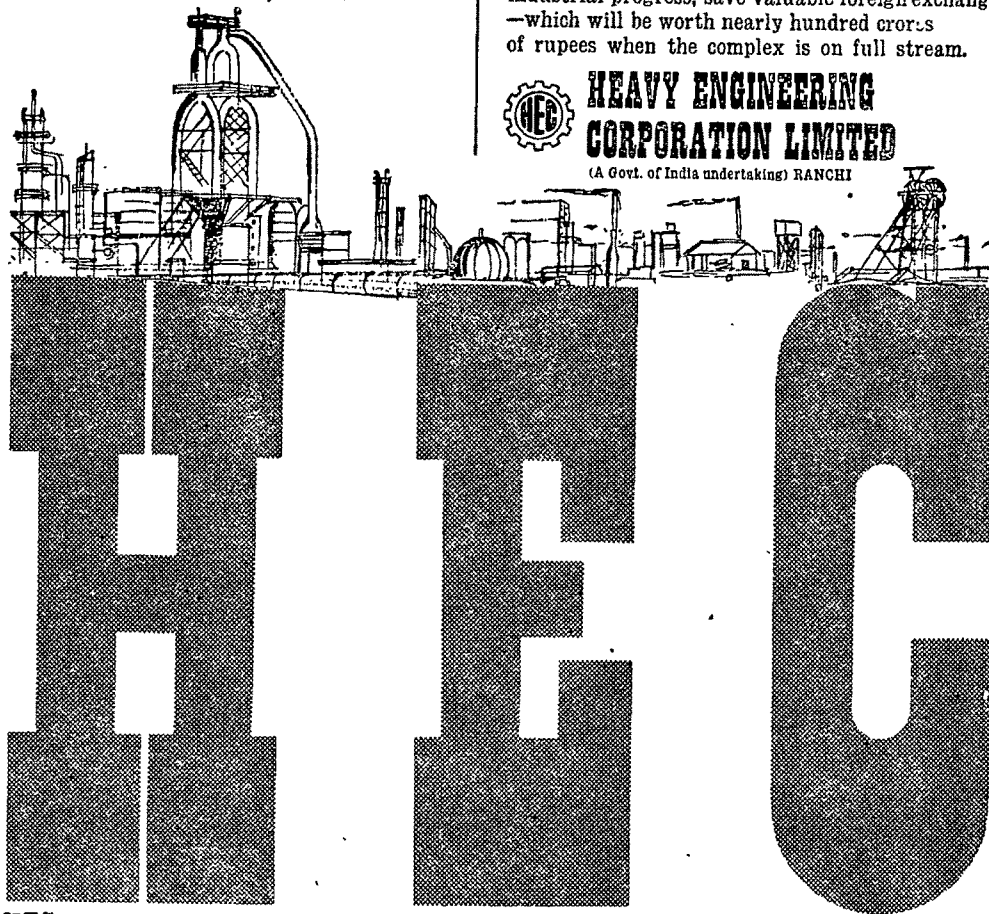
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Sihanouk's Fears and the Way Out

K. M. P.

THE announcement of the bombing halt created a sense of panic in the South East Asian countries. Even Prince Sihanouk, who is the champion of neutrality and the sovereignty and independence of his country, came out in favour of American presence in Asia. He does not want the Americans in his country, but is prepared to tolerate them in neighbouring Thailand. His argument is simple: without the presence of another great power in the area, it will be difficult for the countries of the region to resist pressure from China; they will be forced to make up with China or be prepared to fight for their independence. Sihanouk made it clear that Cambodia has every intention of fighting for its independence and territorial integrity, but the presence of another great power in the region would give him room for diplomatic manoeuvre.

While Prince Sihanouk was talking in terms of a balancing act, the Foreign Minister of Singapore, Mr. Rajaratnam, was even more open. He felt that the withdrawal from Vietnam will mean a basic change in American policy and may lead to an ignoring of Asia in general. America may not become isolationist, but it will concentrate on Latin America and Europe. In his opinion, while the United States' military presence in the region may not be practicable, it should support modernizing tendencies in Asia and help develop the economy. Mr. Rajaratnam believes that only by modernizing the economy and the social structure the countries of South-East Asia will be able to achieve stability and internal cohesion. "How-

ever, if they do (withdraw from Asia), there will be a mutative change in the policies of many Asian countries whose collective impact must be felt even in an America that has gone into political purdah." He continued: "South-East Asia, whether it likes it or not, must review its politics to ensure its survival and progress in the light of new circumstances that a US withdrawal from Asia must create."

Japan's Role

There cannot be any doubts about the implications of the Rajaratnam statement. He too believes that South-East Asia must revise its policies to China in the light of the circumstances created by American withdrawal. The South-East Asian politicians are clear that there will be a power vacuum created by American withdrawal and that the local powers will not be able either collectively or individually to fill it. This assumes that in South-East Asia there are only two powers, the United States and China, and if Washington decides on withdrawal, Peking will automatically step in. It ignores the fact that Japan is slowly becoming the dominant economic power in the region. The ending of the Vietnam war will affect Japan's trade adversely and it will try to make-up its losses from the cessation of war orders by launching a more intensive drive for markets. It has already secured a dominant position in Indonesia; its share of the Singapore and Cambodian markets is rising, and soon it will be able to secure by pacific means what it failed to achieve by force

of arms—the conquest of South-East Asian economies.

Japan is not the only other country with interests in South East Asia. The Soviet Union has established economic relations with Malaysia. A Philippines economic mission is visiting the East European countries. Soviet interest in the South-East Asian region is bound to grow with the independence of South Vietnam. Hanoi is more closely linked to Moscow than to Peking, and the Soviet Union will be as much opposed to a Chinese takeover of South-East Asia as Washington. India too is contributing to a limited extent to the development of the economies of South-East Asia.

Tribal Ferment

Economic development is not the major problem that these countries face; it is political. From Assam to Vietnam—that is throughout continental South-East Asia—is a large tribal belt which is in ferment. Indonesia and the Philippines are a case apart: there is widespread rebellion in those countries. In certain areas of Indonesia there is no settled government. In the Philippines there is anarchy in the provinces north of Manila; the Muslims of Mindano and Sulu are restive. But it is continental South-East Asia that is likely to explode. The tribes do not recognise national frontiers and move from one country to another with impunity. Their loyalty is to the tribe and not to the nation, and they are not in the mainstream of national politics. In Burma the Kachins and the Karens were for a long time a thorn in the flesh of the Rangoon government;

in Thailand the tribes of the north and north-east notably the Lao, have taken the lead in the armed struggle against the government in Bangkok ; in Cambodia there have been reports that the Montagnards are being encouraged by foreign elements to join their brothers in Vietnam and form an independent State. In Laos politics is to a certain extent not only regional but tribal. In South Vietnam there is the Fulro, organization of the tribal people of the high plateau, which is struggling for independence and is willing to co-operate with the Liberation Front or the Saigon Government as the exigencies of the situation demand.

The tribals are open to suggestions from and the influence of foreign powers. In the territories contiguous to China, the tribals on the Chinese side of the frontier may be used by Peking as its agents for penetration into the region. This is one of the accusations against China by Bangkok. The Thais have equally accused the Pathet Lao of sending tribesmen from Laos into the north-east. It is however not only the communist powers who are accused of using tribesmen as pawns in the political game. The Americans are equally adept at it. The US spends large sums on social studies and ethnological surveys, and the purpose is not purely academic. The basic idea is to find out the tensions in society, the hierarchy of leadership and the best means to influence the people. In Thailand it is part of the anti-subversion movement ; in South Vietnam the influence of American advisers among the pro-Government montagnards had grown to such an extent that the puppet government was constrained to protest

against it some time ago. Saigon even accused the Americans of trying to create an independent authority in the plateau region.

A second factor leading to political instability is the narrow base on which authority rests. In South Vietnam at the moment it has no base at all : in Thailand a small-oligarchy which manipulates politics for economic power holds all the levers of power ; in Burma a military regime is in power ; in Laos the present government is without authority ; in Indonesia a small clique of senior officers holds power. The people have no political stake, they have not even materially benefited from independence to any extent.

In the case of Cambodia the Sangkum and Buddhist socialism have considerable achievements to their credit, and Prince Sihanouk considers himself the first servant of the people and keeps in constant touch. Yet, he has not been able to win the confidence of the minorities or even the whole-hearted support of the Khmer people.

Cambodia is in many ways the most significant case in South-East Asia ; the government is trying to develop the economy, corruption is limited, the administration is efficient and reasonably honest. Yet Cambodia is not politically stable. There is the Free Khmer movement financed by the Central Intelligence Agency and supported by Bangkok, Saigon and Washington. There are the Red Khmer, a growing force with a widespread network spreading outward from the capital and with considerable support among students and government employees. There was serious rebellion in Battambang province last year. Some obser-

vers termed it a peasant uprising, and unrest continues on Battambang, Rattankiri, Mondilkiri and Koh Krong.

It is not subversion as such that frightens Prince Sihanouk. What he fears is something more serious. Cambodia has lost a considerable part of its territory to Vietnam because the Vietnamese people settled in the Mekong delta area till by their numbers they overwhelmed the Khmers. Vietnam remains overpopulated and there is considerable clandestine migration to Cambodia, some of whose frontier provinces are virtually uninhabited. The Prince is aware that this trend will continue whether the Government is Communist or capitalist, unless he takes measures to settle these areas with Khmer population. Yet the pressure of population will tell on politics, and though Hanoi has promised to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Cambodia, he is aware that in the long run Cambodia will stand to lose.

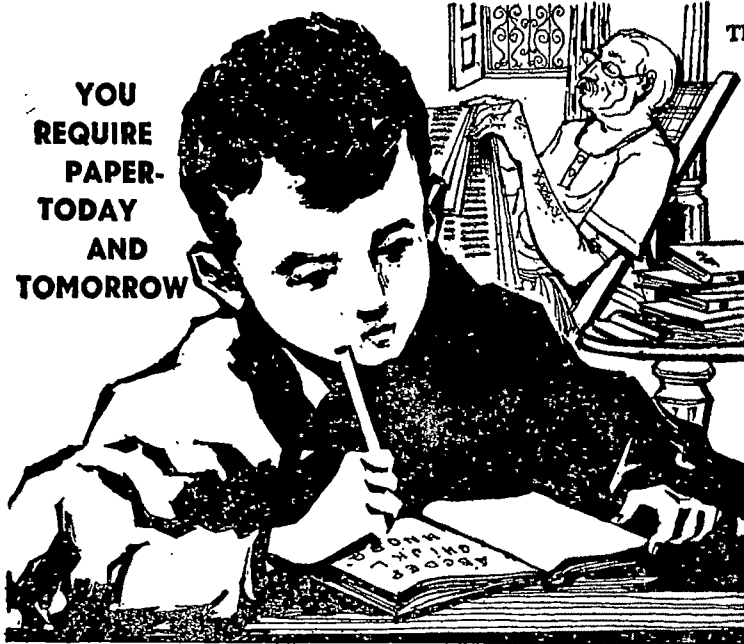
He is however not prepared to alter the political structure; Cambodia is a guided democracy under a sane and wise ruler. The people's participation in government is limited and this is one of the main reasons for the revolts.

Against the external threat an American presence in Thailand will only be a temporary palliative : in the long run an Indo-China federation—of Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam—with a neutralist foreign policy, a common defence, and co-ordinated economic policy will perhaps be the best guarantee against external aggression. This will provide a strong barrier to Chinese expansionism.

Prince Sihanouk should therefore reconsider the federation idea.
(To be Continued)

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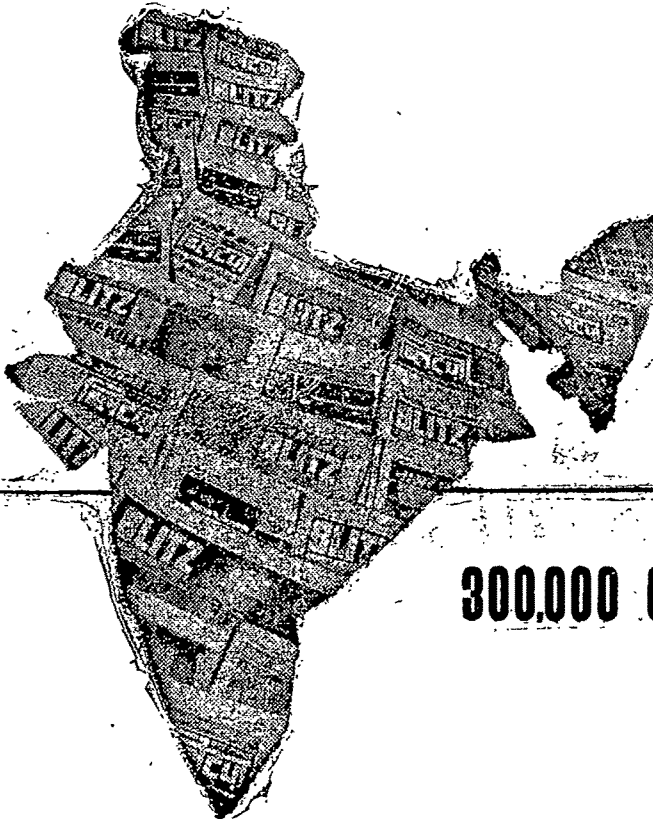
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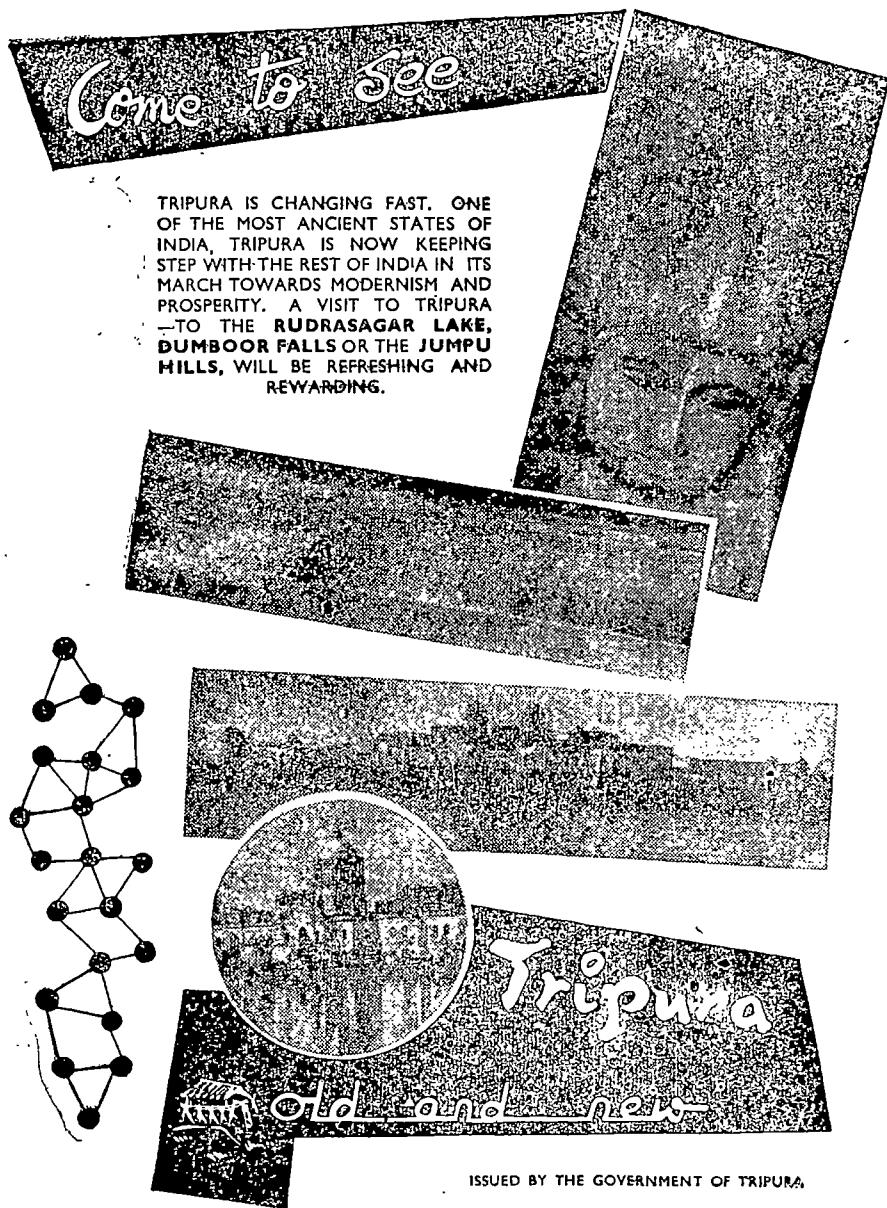
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Reply To Prof. Sarkar—IV

SCRUTATOR

(The earlier instalment of this Reply appeared in *MAINSTREAM*,
October 19 and 26 and November 2)

IT is surprising that Prof. Sarkar in his entire Note (*Mainstream* October 19) has not discussed the Czechoslovak crisis in the background of the *actual* political set-up in Europe today.

The Western free-world champions were all excited about the events in Czechoslovakia. As early as March 30, 1963, Klaus Mehnert, the noted German specialist on anti-Communism (some of whose books are on sale in this country) had a dig at Lenin while speaking on television on Czechoslovakia's new path: "This means development in a direction that would have provoked Lenin in the extreme—a development towards social democracy, towards democratic socialism in Czechoslovakia... It is therefore a logical possibility that one day a social democracy, so to speak, will take over the reins there."

But Mehnert was not the only one delivering a funeral oration on Lenin in Czechoslovakia.

On June 14, the well-known American expert on Communist affairs, Prof. Brezinski, a consultant of the State Department, paid warm tributes to "the interesting Czechoslovak experiment" and added his obiter dictum: "My basic thesis is that Leninism in an advanced modern society has become outdated."

Prof. Sarkar may object that what an American specialist says is no proof of counter-revolution in Czechoslovakia. What is worth noting however is that Prof. Brezinski was not speaking in Washington but in Prague. He was a guest speaker at the Institute of Foreign Politics in Prague—which speaks volumes about the political inclinations of

those who were running such an authoritative institute in a socialist country.

Note for nothing did West German Minister Strauss in his latest book come out with the outburst: "Communist regimes must be totally liquidated: the way and standard of life in East Europe must be adapted to the way of life in West Europe. We must encourage and support this process....."

The widely-circulated West German magazine, *Der Spiegel*, gave candid expression to Western hopes: "If Prague's democratic socialist experiment were successful, this could not only change communism and Europe. It could be a historical event, which in its significance would correspond to the Communist capture of power in East Europe after World War II."

But the policy-planners in West Germany were more circumspect. They were anxious not to show their hand too early, because they had drawn their own lessons from their fiasco in Hungary 12 years ago. Much to the embarrassment of the Bonn authorities, the West German newspaper, *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, published on July 18 an article with the intriguing caption, "Amateur Diplomats in the No Man's Land of Official Policy" which disclosed the "private" character of the journeys to Prague of a number of Bonn luminaries, including the President of the West German Federal Bank, Herr Blessing; FDP chairman Scheel and SPD deputy Oepler, among others. After returning from Prague, Scheel made a confidential report to Chancellor Kiesinger and Minister

Brandt. Already was known the West German Government's readiness to grant Czechoslovakia aid amounting to 700 million marks. The Bundestag Foreign Affairs Commission also sent a delegation to Prague under the leadership of Oepler.

Next day, July 19, another West German paper, *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, carried a commentary on the Western approach: "Anyone in the Federal Republic who would like to help Czechoslovakia should not rush with open arm to offer help at present.....Where substantial aid is offered, it would be better to do this as quietly as possible and always through West European friends."

Ota Sik's visit to Britain about this time was not of an academic character. He had consultations with the City figures, and it was no accident that there were reports about Prague getting World Bank loans.

These were not just minor incidents; whoever knows conditions in Europe this summer would say these were ominous straws in the wind.

More blatant was the campaign in the Sudetenland zone, bringing back memories of Munich. The armed concentrations at Bad Tolz and Salzburg cannot be totally dismissed. The stepping up of radio and TV propaganda against the Warsaw Pact countries while boosting Czechoslovakia was indeed reminiscent of the Hungarian crisis 12 years ago. Munich's "Radio Free Europe", an acknowledged CIA-backed agency, took pride of place in this campaign, as it did over Hungary in 1956.

In the face of all this, what did the Prague Government do? The Czech frontier overlooking West Germany was practically thrown open. Anybody coming from West Germany could get a visa by just paying eight dollars, with only a very nominal customs check.

Even the Vatican turned up on the scene. Towards the end of July, many Vatican priests set out for Czechoslovakia. Those who remember the Vatican's role in the Hungarian crisis will not be surprised. The political possibilities of the Catholic Church's role in Czechoslovakia were fully taken into account by the Bonn authorities. In March, Strauss explained to the NDP leaders that the West German Government would, if necessary, extend tangible material support to the Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia.

Not without reason did the Chairman of the Austrian Socialist Party, Kreisky, jubilantly write in *Die Welt*: "The latest developments in Czechoslovakia show that it has been going through the true process of democratisation. The Czechoslovakian Socialist Republic has ceased to be a Communist dictatorship as a result of this. The apparatus of Communist power was paralysed by the internal development." Prof. Sarkar however would like to leave the Czech Communist Party alone, despite the fact that dissension in its top leadership was an open secret even at Cierna and Bratislava.

Prof. Sarkar has taken the unwholesome state of affairs inside the Czechoslovak Communist Party very casually. The witch-hunt against a section of party leadership which did not toe the line of the dominant section and the plan to eliminate them even by means of rigged elections for the Party Congress—all this has been dismissed as "irregularities" which if true "are unfortunately not unknown in the history of other Parties." What he seems to miss is that this itself was cracking up the entire fabric of socialism in Czechoslovakia. It was not the Action Programme which

led to the intervention by Czechoslovakia's socialist allies—Prof Sarkar mentions it as one of the arguments for the intervention—but the weaknesses shown in the Action Programme, downgrading the entire role of the Party and the dictatorship of the proletariat, gave a long-awaited opening for the reactionary forces in Czechoslovakia. The "Two Thousand Words" was not just an accident but the natural consequence of the entire direction of the Czechoslovak leadership throughout summer.

Prof. Sarkar has pleaded for free expression to forces hostile to socialist power because it would foster "the battle of ideas". It may be useful to quote here from the speech by Gustav Husak at the Central Committee of the National Front of Slovakia on September 17: "The question of political leadership is extremely important. Take, for instance, one sector which we have frequently mentioned — the mass information media. A strange thing happened in our country after January: the mass information media turned into an independent power. *This does not exist in any state of the world.* Who influenced the radio, television and the press? Who guided them? Who directed these media not in the sense of censorship, but politically, ideologically? I do not want to slander the work of honest and courageous people who worked in the mass information media, but no state can be indifferent to such matters as whom this tremendous force serves, how it exerts its influence what it helps and what it does not help. *But in many matters the development did not advance as it was desired by the democratically elected State and Party bodies, which are responsible to millions of people.*"

Prof. Sarkar concedes: "There might be a case for intervention if counter-revolution is actually victorious in a country." But he would not agree "to send troops to curb its mere possibility." The logic of this argument amounts to this, that only after counter-revolutionaries have butchered a few thousand Communists as they

did in Hungary, Prof. Sarkar will be satisfied that a situation had arisen justifying intervention, and not before; in other words, it would be necessary for a few thousand Communists to be killed so that intellectual Marxists the world over could certify that a state of counter-revolution existed, and only after such certifying would they declare that a military intervention by allied socialist powers has become necessary. It is this type of logic which revolutionaries throughout history have lampooned. In effect, it amounts to this, that an intellectual Marxist finds it hard to combat the howling propaganda of his adversaries unless and until he can produce some documentary proof of counter-revolutionaries having been installed in power.

Prof Sarkar has been hardly fair in complaining that "the allegation of counter-revolution in progress within Czechoslovakia was not substantiated when the occupation came." While one could agree with him if he had said that the Soviet authorities as also the other powers in the socialist world did not adequately prepare world opinion beforehand about the sorry state of affairs in Czechoslovakia—in contrast to the powerful anti-Soviet propaganda through Czechoslovak mass media—it would be wrong to say that nothing about counter-revolution was substantiated when the occupation came. For months before that, the Soviet and GDR press had been carrying revealing material about trends and happenings in Czechoslovakia. The aberrations in the Prague press came to the notice of the world through exposures in the Soviet and allied press, though it is true that such exposures were not half as voluminous as the Czech press and leaders' open polemics against their socialist allies, uninhibitedly doled out to the West, particularly to the Bonn press, radio and television. Reports about caches of illegal arms found in different places in Czechoslovakia did not appear in Prague but in Moscow and Berlin. Along with the intervention appeared a whole mass of

material in the press of the Soviet Union and GDR. Perhaps Prof. Sarkar would not touch them as authentic since they came from "interventionist" sources: it is noticeable that although his Note was ready more than two weeks after the intervention, there is no reference at all in it to any of such material from the Soviet and allied sources—a rather unfortunate lapse from objectivity, least expected of an eminent teacher of history.

At another place, Prof. Sarkar displays the same impatience with reality when he deals with the allegations of counter-revolutionary activity, saying that it would be wrong to decide the issue *ex parte* since Czech leaders denied such allegations.

Actually, the Warsaw Pact powers never tried to decide the issue *ex parte*: if anything, they displayed extraordinary patience in dealing with the Czech leadership. From January they held consultations with the Czechoslovak leaders *not less than twelve times* and *as the situation grew worse*, particularly from May, they warned the Czech leaders about the growing dangers to the socialist system through the upheaval in Prague. Most of the time, Dubcek and his colleagues agreed with such assessment of the danger, but took no action whatsoever to combat the danger. All these consultations were not monopolised by the Soviet leaders but were held also with Hungarian, Polish, Bulgarian and East German leaders. In fact, it was the Czech leadership which refused to attend the joint meeting at Warsaw in July while it insisted on holding the crucial talks with Soviet leaders in August on Czechoslovak soil—and the Soviet leaders complied, since they seemed to be more conscious of the danger to the Socialist order than to their own standing as the leaders of one of the biggest world powers. In its relations with no other country has the Soviet Union shown such consideration.

Prof. Sarkar made a big play of the fact that the Warsaw Pact

authorities did not publish the names of the Czech leaders who had appealed to them to help save socialism in Czechoslovakia. Nobody will deny the fact that had their names been published, it would have helped the world to understand better the true state of affairs in Czechoslovakia.

At the same time, one has to note the fact—which was broadcast even by the Western press at the time—that both at Cierna and Bratislava, the Czechoslovak delegation was divided and Dubcek found himself in a minority that disfavoured the terms of settlement, and it was the majority in the Czechoslovak delegation which forced the settlement. And it was the subsequent non-implementation of the agreed terms on the part of the Czechoslovak leadership under Dubcek that forced the decision to intervene upon the Warsaw Powers. Not only that. Even after Bratislava, the Hungarian and German leaders intervened in person and failed before the intervention was decided upon jointly by the Warsaw Pact countries.

It is not unheard of in history that the names of all those responsible for a decision are not released. In this case, it was all the more so since the reactionary elements in Czechoslovakia seemed bent on preventing the rise of a Kadar in Prague. The last-moment decision not to publish the names of those who had sent the appeal to the Warsaw Pact powers seemed to have been inspired by fears of victimisation by Czechoslovak reactionaries. And the Warsaw Pact powers knew that it is this band of dedicated Communists who ultimately will have to fight and bear the burden of responsibility for ensuring the security of the Czechoslovak socialist state, and it would be folly to expose them unnecessarily to any danger from reactionary quarters.

Incidentally, Prof. Sarkar had a dig at a CPI organ for having published that appeal by Czechoslovak leaders along with the communique on the military intervention on the same day, that is August 21, suggesting that the appeal itself was a hoax. Had

he cared to look up the original, he would have found that the appeal was *only released* to the press on the day of the intervention; it was not the day of its drafting or submission.

What is missing in Prof. Sarkar's Note is that despite his historical erudition, he has been unable to look at the episode either in the background of Czechoslovakia's role in contemporary history nor in its totality. That is why he has missed the point that each of the different arguments may have contributed to the decision to intervene. The question of strategic self-defence; of the danger of counter-revolution; the appeal by some Czechoslovak leaders; the weakness of the Czechoslovak Communist leadership—each of these might have contributed to the Warsaw Powers' decision, but none of these could have on its own brought about a situation demanding military intervention. To separate each argument and then attack it may be good for debating societies but not for those who claim to be serious revolutionaries.

There is very little to comment upon in Prof. Sarkar's concluding section entitled "Possible Consequences". His first point that counter-revolutionary trends within Czechoslovakia are "most likely to be strengthened" by the Warsaw Powers' intervention has not proved to be true. On the other hand, a process of differentiation inside the Czech Communist Party is not difficult to discern.

Secondly, there is no need for thinking that "many friends of the Soviet Union will be disheartened and Soviet isolation is bound to increase." In fact, the overwhelming majority in the world Communist movement has come out in support of the Soviet stand. If the Soviet action has been criticised by a number of parties in Western Europe, a much larger segment from the four continents of Asia, Africa and the two Americas have strongly supported the Warsaw Powers' intervention.

Thirdly, there is no reason to fear that the military intervention

has dealt "a severe blow to Socialist ideals." Such fears were expressed at the time of the Hungarian crisis, and yet these 12 years have seen the frontiers of freedom and democracy extending under Soviet leadership ; and it was precisely on this count that the dogmatists in Peking took umbrage with Moscow. Prof Sarkar himself admits : "It was the Twentieth Congress (of the Soviet Communist Party) which beckoned us to the new path and released us from the spell of Stalin's all-knowing wisdom." What he has not cared to add is that the Twentieth Congress tenets were worked out by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and not by its critics outside. The world Communist movement has set out since mid-fifties on the path of democratic

advance, much more confidently under the leadership of the Soviet Communist Party. This does not mean that the Soviet Communists are infallible ; they have committed mistakes and have learnt from them. But criticism of mistakes is not the same thing as weakening the very bedrock of solidarity that the socialist system tries to strengthen.

Reading Prof. Sarkar's Note, one gets the impression that although he pays tribute to the Soviet Union's past achievements, he is weighed down with almost cynical disbelief on practically every count so far as the Warsaw Powers' action in Czechoslovakia is concerned. Not only is he unconvinced about the wisdom of the action, he does not seem to be prepared to extend even benefit of doubt to the Soviet Union on this

score. The Warsaw Power's intervention in Czechoslovakia, in his view, is not just a solitary mistake but really marks a turning-point in the Soviet line, reversing the process initiated by the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party.

No student of history would like to rush to conclusions on the strength of a single episode, least of all a scholar of Prof. Sarkar's standing. It would, therefore, be a misnomer to call his condemnation of the Soviet position as only "friendly criticisms" : they seem to point to more fundamental differences, even if the distinguished contributor had not spelt it out openly.

(Next Week : Interview with Luigi Longo, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Italy).

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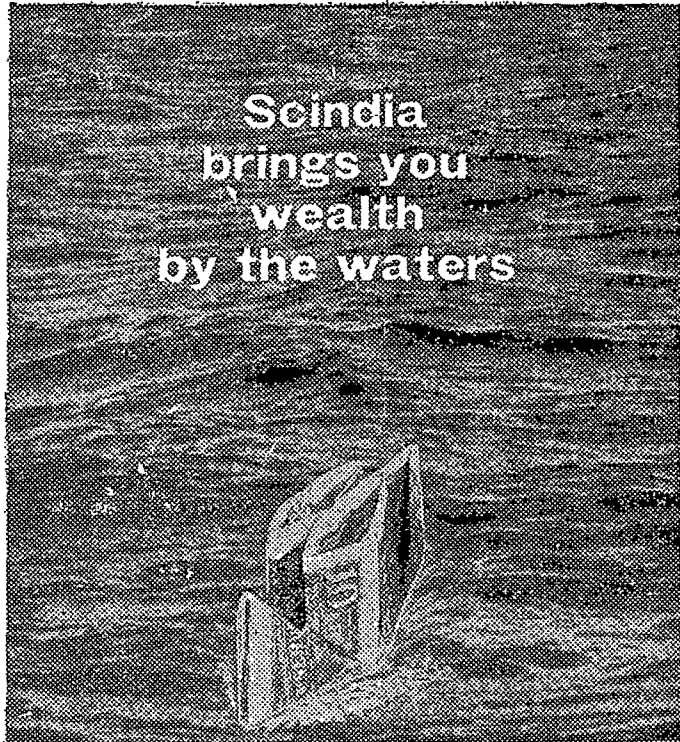
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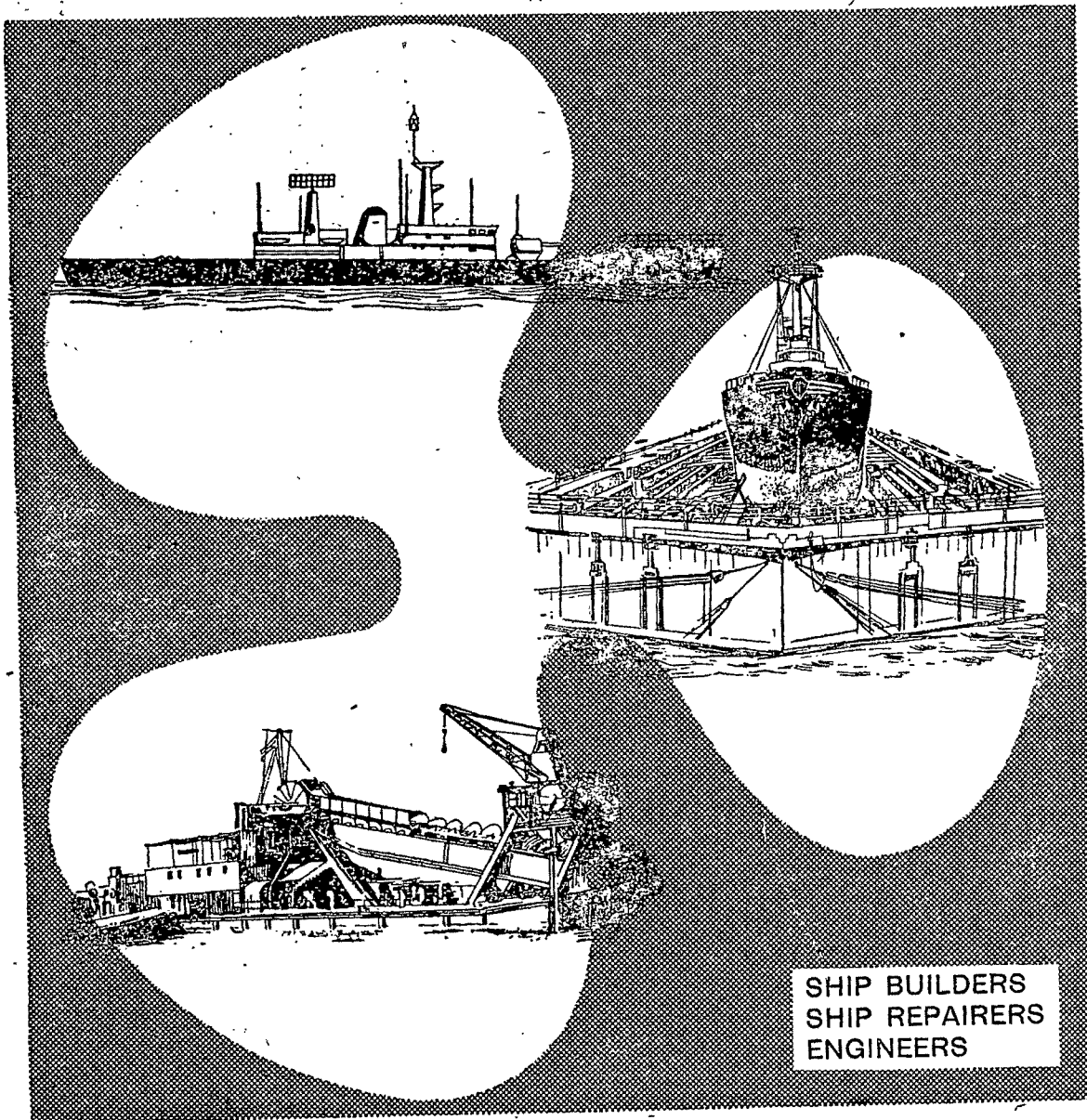
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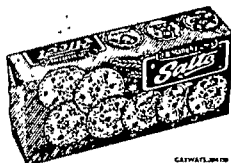




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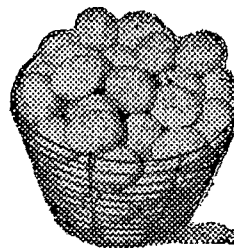
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**Ghadar 1915—India's First Armed Revolution by
Khushwant Singh and Satindra Singh.
(R.K. Publishing House, New Delhi-1. Price : 14-50)**

IN the course of the Indian national struggle, many terrorist-revolutionary groups were formed from time to time and caught the imagination of the people. An assessment of their role and their contribution towards the attainment of freedom is still to be made.

The book under review, jointly authored by Sri Khushwant Singh ("Journalist, novelist, short story writer and historian" as the blurbs says) and Sri Satindra Singh ("trained as a historian") does not help in filling up the lacuna. The book consists of 103 pages of written material and 32 pages of pen drawings of the Ghadar leaders. The text, however, takes up only 57 pages, the remaining pages being devoted to the appendices, bibliography and errata. Of the 57 pages of text, more than half is taken up with the narration of the story of the Indian immigration to Canada and the United States, Indian organizations in Canada and the United States, the voyage of the Komagata Maru and the shooting at Budge Budge. "The story of the great Rebellion of 1915" which, according to Khushwant Singh "has never been adequately told and remains to this day an unwritten but extremely important chapter in the history of Indian's freedom movement" is thus adequately told in a little over 20 pages. However, whatever, it tells of this story, adequately or otherwise, is of doubtful value.

Khushwant Singh calls the Ghadar Rebellion of 1915 as an

"extremely important chapter in the history of India's freedom movement." However one looks in vain to find a substantiation of this statement. Nowhere do the authors try to see the importance of the rebellion and its role in the national movement. A lot of space has been devoted to narrate the Komagata Maru incident which apparently had nothing to do with the Ghadar Rebellion of 1915. No evidence is given to prove the occurrence of a rebellion (except in Singapore, which was not a part of the Ghadar rebellion) and before reaching the end of the story, the rebellion is turned into a conspiracy. The authors complete the description by mentioning the dramatic incident on the last day of the San Francisco trial when Ram Singh shot Ram Chandra and in turn was himself shot dead by the marshal of the court. "Thus ended the Ghadar conspiracy to foment a revolution in India" (p. 52). Later (p. 55) it is said that "Although the projected uprising was nipped in the bud, as it were, the plan of the Ghadar revolutionaries was otherwise well-thought out and well-timed." But all that the authors say about the rebellion goes to prove that it was not 'well-thought out.' Almost all the plans either misfired or were discovered by the police. Nor was it 'well-timed' as the authors themselves say, "The Ghadarites soon discovered to their chagrin that the political climate in India was far from conducive to revolution."

The authors have quite erro-

neously presented three different movements—the Indo-German Gun-running conspiracy, the Ghadar Movement in America and the movement in the Punjab headed by Rash Behari Bose—into a single movement. This is despite the fact that most of the material was collected by Satindra Singh and that it was Khushwant Singh's "privilege to be able to visit most of these countries (over a dozen countries are mentioned), interview the people concerned and inspect the records of the Ghadar Party." (What these records are, the authors have nowhere made clear.)

The Indo-German gun-running conspiracy originated in Berlin rather than in America. With the outbreak of the First World War, a few Indian students in Berlin headed by Birendranath Chattopadhyaya formed a committee under the name *Deutscher Verein Der Freunde Indiens* and established contact with the German Foreign Office through Dr. Helmuth, nephew of Harr Clemence Von Delbrück, Foreign Secretary of Prussia. The Germans, without knowing the condition of India, readily agreed to help the Indians with arms and ammunitions to foment a rebellion in India. With the British maintaining an effective blockade of Germany and their control over the high seas, there was practically no chance of smuggling arms from there. The only way was to ship arms through some neutral State. This led the Germans to think of America as the probable place for their adventure.

After the preliminaries were over, the Berlin Committee established contact with Jatin Mukherjee, the leader of the Bengal group and sent Heramba Lal Gupta to America as an emissary of the Committee to contact Ram Chandra, the leader of the Ghadar Party. Heramba Lal explained the plan to Ram Chandra and asked him to work in subordination to the Berlin Committee. Ram Chandra refused to work in subordination to the committee, but he agreed to co-operate. Thus Ram Chandra never came in direct

contact with Jatin Mukherjee, the main architect of the arms-smuggle scheme.

Secondly, it is equally doubtful whether Rash Behari had any contact with Ram Chandra or the Ghadar Party in America. If Ramchandra had any contact with Rash Behari, it is very likely that he would have informed him about the arms-smuggle scheme. But Rash Behari knew nothing of the plan. Sachindranath Sanyal, the right-hand man of Rash Behari, in his memoirs (*Vandi Jiban*—Bengali) has neither mentioned the name of Ram Chandra nor has he claimed to have taken part in the arms-smuggle scheme. In fact the Ghadar movement in America, the Indo-German gun-running scheme and the movement in the Punjab were practically three separate movements. The leaders of these three movements hardly knew each other.

The Germans wanted to use Indian revolutionaries to foment trouble in India and this gave some Indians abroad an opportunity to fleece German gold. M.N. Roy, one of the architects of the arms-smuggle scheme, writes in his memoirs that "It was a wild goose chase. They failed to arrive, because as it was discovered later, the whole plan was a hoax, a veritable swindle."

Although the plan of sending arms was a hoax, the Germans were liberal in distributing money. And many leaders connected with this scheme made fortunes for themselves. Ram Chandra knew quite well that a revolution in India was not possible and this he expressed quite frankly to Lajpat Rai. To quote Lajpat Rai's *Autobiographical Writings*: "He (Ramchandra) had told them (Germans) that hundreds and thousands of Indians would be there to receive arms and start a revolution at once. He was afraid lest there may be nobody to receive arms and he might be discredited in the eyes of the Germans". He further said that "the whole of the Punjab and Karachi could not produce 5,000 men who had seen a rifle much less a machine-gun."

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One of the most significant characteristics of the Ghadar movement was its secular character. The authors call it "the most powerful terrorist movement in the history of India's freedom movement as well as the first one to rise above communal considerations." While the movement did rise above narrow sectarian considerations, the authors do not seem to do so. The authors quote Lala Lajpat Rai's *Autobiographical Writings* at some length to praise the Sikh and Punjabi revolutionaries, and to discredit the Bengali revolutionaries. The only "illuminating observation" that has caught the authors' attention pertains to the unprincipled conduct of the Bengali revolutionaries in their campaign and in obtaining and spending of funds. Lack of principles and the spending of funds for their private pur-

poses was not the monopoly of the Bengalis; it was common to all with a few exceptions. The authors have been very selective in quoting from Lala Lajpat Rai. Another statement of the Lala has obviously escaped their attention; "As for the traitors and spies, I think the Punjabees had as many as the Bengalees". (*Autobiographical Writings*, p. 46).

That the Ghadarites contributed to the growth of the Baddar Akali movement and to the left-wing political movements in the Punjab is well-known. The authors dispose this of in a few lines. Many relevant questions which arise in relation to the Ghadarites—what was their political ideology, how much of it was transformed in course of time, and how much of it influenced the character of the movements that they later joined—are not even raised.—K.M.



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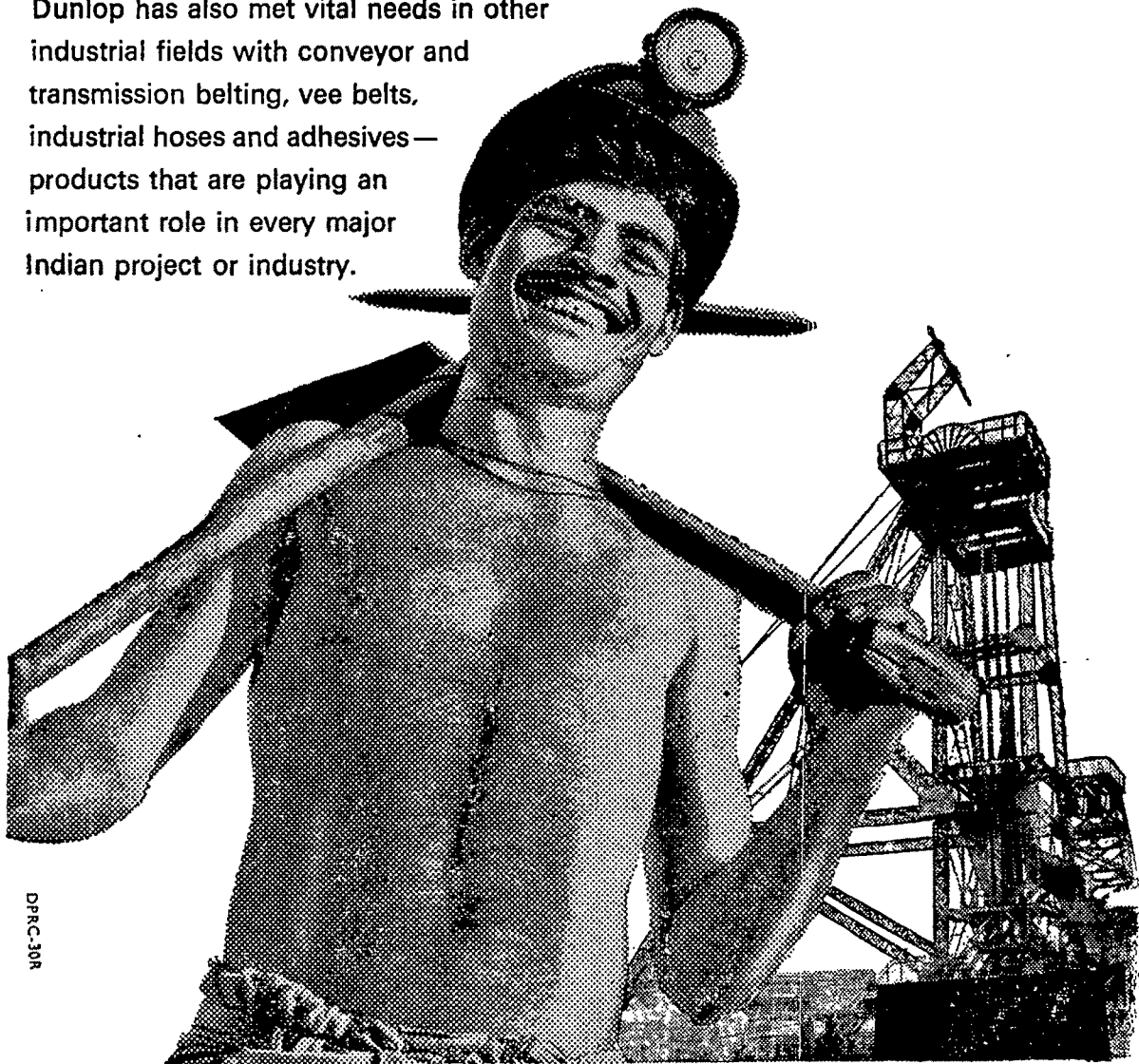
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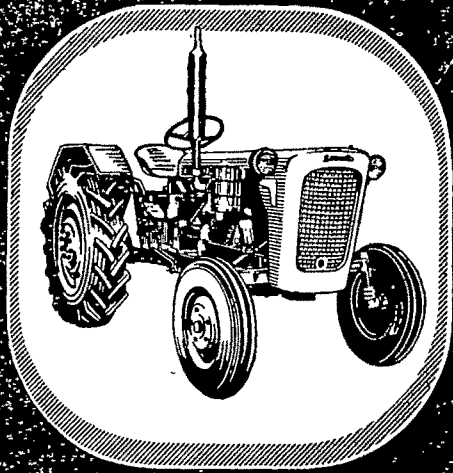


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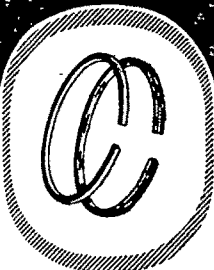
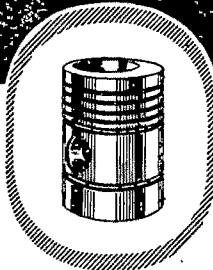
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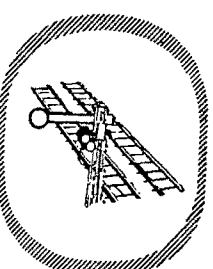
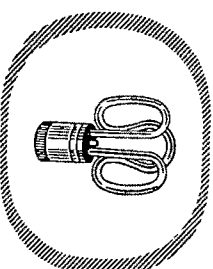
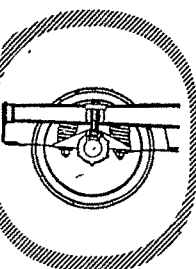
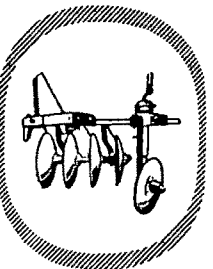
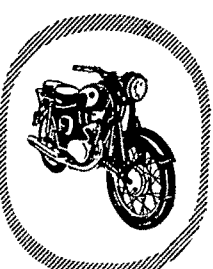
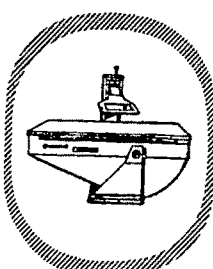
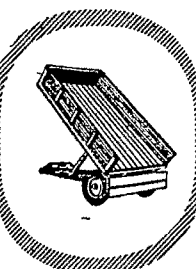
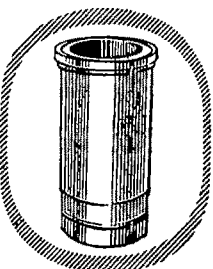
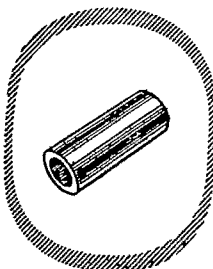
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NOVEMBER 23, 1968

HARYANA MAKES HEADWAY

FACTS AT A GLANCE

- Production of foodgrains during 1967-68 exceeded 31 lakh tonnes, as against a target of 25.70 lakh tonnes.
- Crop Loan System for supply of credit to farmers up to Rs. 3,000/- for production purposes has been introduced.
- Over 2,00,000 tonnes of wheat have been procured as against 50,000 tonnes last year.
- 1,40,000 tonnes of rice was exported by the State out of the last crop, against the quota of 50,000 tonnes.
- Consumption of fertilizers will go up from 1.87 lakh tonnes in 1967-68 to 3.15 lakh tonnes in 1968-69.
- Eight lakh acres will be brought under the High Yielding Varieties during 1968-69, as against 3.30 lakh during 1967-68.
- 15,000 additional tubewells will be energised during 1968-69.
- 800 Fair Price Depots have been set up under the Consumers' Democracy Scheme.
- Three Corporations viz., Haryana Financial Corporation, Small Industries and Export Corporation and Haryana Industrial Development Corporation have been set up for providing specialized facilities for promotion of Industries.
- Rs. One crore have been provided for flood relief measures during the current year.
- Free education has been reintroduced in Government Schools up to middle standard.
- Rs. 50 lakhs have been earmarked for development of Kurukshetra University and Kurukshetra town during 1968-69.
- State Insurance Scheme covers 3,80,000 factory workers and their families.
- Out of total Plan Outlay of Rs. 23.43 crores for 1968-69, Rs. 16.95 crores or 72.8% will be spent on Agriculture, Irrigation and Power Schemes.
- Expenditure on Social and Developmental Services has gone up four times since 1966-67, as against Rs. 6.63 crores spent in 1966-67, Rs. 28.25 crores have been allocated for 1968-69.
- The State will switchover to Hindi at all levels from the 26th January, 1969.

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WHO ARE THE ENEMIES ?

IF the conference of Governors, at which great concern was expressed about the activities of political "extremists" in some States, did not consider it necessary at all to discuss the defiant speeches and activities of communal elements, including incitement of violence against and open denigration of certain minority communities, this only reflected the attitudes prevalent at the highest levels of administration in the country.

In recent weeks the "Hindu Rashtra" cry has become insistent and strident, and RSS boss Golwalkar even addressed a rally of his communal storm-troopers on these lines within the Union Territory of Delhi. In Banaras Hindu University elements under the influence of the RSS are virtually holding all the students to ransom, and serious allegations have been made about the conduct of the Vice-Chancellor in this connection. Some Jana Sangh spokesmen have been harping on their pet theory of non-Hindus somehow being aliens in the land of their birth. Official and non-official bodies and individuals have gone into some of the more recent communal disturbances and have given their findings. Apart from all this, there is general awareness among the people of the nature and intent of the forces that engineer communal violence and carry on ceaseless propaganda from the platform and in the press for this purpose.

Despite all these factors the Governors of States, clearly preoccupied with the political requirements of the Union Government of which they are the nominees and proven agents, did not find time to discuss the steps that should be taken urgently to combat communal elements in the different States, but had ample time to deliver homilies about the need to preserve "democracy" by suppressing "extremist" elements demanding radical socio-economic changes in the country. The conclusion is inescapable that the mid-term polls in four States and their implications for the Centre, rather than the need to safeguard national unity and bring about national integration, guided the thinking of the Governors and of the Union Home Minister who set the tone for the two-day discussions by holding forth on the

need for a "strong" Centre, presumably as a counterblast to the growing demand for greater autonomy for the States.

It is indeed strange that the Union Government, whose spokesmen frequently proclaim their anxiety to protect and further the secular character of our democracy, should be so little exercised over the invasion of the institutions of higher learning by rank communal elements. Education Minister Triguna Sen who, in the earlier stages, appeared greatly worried and was reported to have pulled up the Vice-Chancellor of Banaras University, now seems reconciled to the unwholesome activities in the campus. He has rejected the plea for Central intervention and investigation on the ground of reluctance to interfere with the autonomy of universities; his argument is that it will be a bad precedent.

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The concept of university autonomy is surely not based on the idea that the campus can be turned with impunity into a happy hunting-ground for communal, caste and other reactionary groups bent upon establishing their hegemony and poisoning the minds of youth. The concept is based on the understanding that external influences should not operate within the campus and vitiate the atmosphere to the detriment of undisturbed learning.

Autonomy is essentially a guarantee that in matters of admission and instruction political and financial influences will not hold sway. To stretch this noble concept to mean that even if murders take place within a campus and even if flagrant attempts are made to divide students and teaching staff into warring groups resulting in violence and the suspension of fruitful pursuit of studies, the Central authorities should merely watch helplessly, is to pervert the whole idea.

The point about BHU is that it is the Vice-Chancellor himself against whom a variety of disquieting allegations have been made; he has been charged with extending special facilities to a group under the influence of communal organisations and with having adopted a partisan attitude throughout. The charge has been made by students and teachers who feel that the University should function as the major seat of learning that it is, and not as a battlefield between rival groups influenced and controlled from outside. It is pretty clear from all this who are really fighting for genuine autonomy and who are using the concept as a cloak for encouraging activities inimical to the proper functioning of the university. It is in this context that Sri Triguna Sen's announcement that the university authorities themselves would conduct the investigation comes as a shock. It all looks like an attempt to protect the Vice-Chancellor and others concerned rather than as a serious effort to find out the whole truth. In a situation of the kind that prevails in BHU one would have expected that the Vice-Chancellor would have been asked to step down to facilitate a full and fair inquiry into the recent ugly events.

Another aspect that has caused widespread public concern is the unrestricted entry of the police force into campuses on the slightest pretext. The attack by the PAC on students within the Allahabad University campus is one of the latest examples. It would be interesting to know how Sri Triguna Sen reconciles the Government's reluctance to interfere with university "autonomy" where communal elements are on the rampage with the alacrity of the police in entering campuses and beating up students agitating in pursuance of legitimate demands connected with education.

What appears to emerge is that the authorities at the Centre are in no mood to antagonize the communal organisations whose leaders are engaged in setting community against community and whose members pursue the logic of such instigation in the streets and

in the bylanes. At the same time, the Central authorities are quite ready to adopt a "strong" attitude towards their own employees seeking better wages and living conditions and towards political parties and groups demanding an end to the pampering of big business houses and monopolies and radical changes in the nation's economic structure. They consider the demand for honest implementation of the promise of socialism more dangerous than the open propagation of communal hatred and the harassment of weaker caste groups, especially in the rural areas. They are more anxious to prevent the functioning of Leftist or Left-dominated governments in the States than to pull up Central Ministers deliberately and categorically inciting party men in the concerned States to "rise in revolt" against the lawfully established governments. In short, the Centre is concerned about political play and not about either national unity or socialism which serve as no more than a cloak to hide the greed for continued enjoyment of power and all that its possession brings.

At least some of those in power are known sympathisers of the communal organisations, and their influence in the administration is effective enough to prevent action against the communal elements who now make no effort whatever to hide their immediate as well as long-term aims. Sri Sen is probably helpless in the face of pressure. His reluctance to "interfere" to set things right in BHU is part of the Government's unwillingness to put into effect speedily the decisions taken by the National Integration Council and its standing Committee to counter the communal and other divisive forces operating in the country.

It may not be wrong to conclude in the circumstances that those in power—or at any rate those among them who count—consider the communal groups as allies in the struggle to maintain the socio-economic *status quo* against the growing popular demand for change and a more equitable economic structure led by the progressive political parties. To those in power today the real enemies are the people themselves, for it is the legitimate social and economic aspirations of the common people that the Leftist parties—including even those whom the Home Minister and the Governors consider "extremists"—voice.

Communalism is after all one of the many planks of reaction ranged against the people's interests. When communalism is encouraged either actively or merely by tolerance, it has to be seen as part of the attempt by vested interest of various kinds to prevent the furtherance of the revolution set in motion by the attainment of national independence. By their present tactics our rulers may indeed gain a respite from popular pressure for changes to bring about greater public control over the nation's wealth and more equitable distribution of it; but it is certainly absurd to imagine that the tide can be stemmed indefinitely by such means.

CENTRE'S STRENGTH : ILLUSION AND REALITY

EVER since the last general election annual conferences of the Governors have acquired a significance which was not attached to them earlier. This year's conference, held last week, was particularly significant because four of the Governors are at the moment directly responsible for running the administration in their respective States. Besides, the Governor of Kerala is functioning as the eyes and ears of the Home Ministry which seems to have decided to create a constitutional crisis in the State and sack the popular Ministry as soon as possible after the mid-term poll in Bengal, Bihar, U.P. and Punjab. And the Governors are now called upon to play a role which the makers of our Constitution did not visualise for them.

Governors having the political stature of a Sarojini Naidu or a Sri Prakasa, the administrative skill of a Homi Modi or a Maharaj Singh and the political cleverness of a K.M. Munshi or a C. Rajagopalachari could not influence the politics or the administration of the States in the past : the Home Ministry then looked upon them as mere constitutional heads. Not so now ; the Home Ministry has worked out a new theory after the Fourth General Election, and tries to interpret the constitutional provisions regarding the functions of the Governors in the light of this theory. The Home Ministry now believes that the Fourth General Election has created conditions of instability in the States but these are balanced by stability at the Centre. It follows from this that it is the duty of the Centre to bring about conditions of stability in the States, and to do so the Centre should be strong and should act with strength.

Since according to the Home Ministry's theory it is for the Centre to ensure the implementation of the provisions of the Constitution in the States and the Governors are under oath to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and the law", they have to function as the agents of the Centre and as its instruments for restoration of stable conditions in the States. Consequently, the provisions of the Constitution are now so interpreted as to enhance the powers of the Governors.

For instance, Article 163 clearly lays down that the Governor has to function on the advice of the Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister except in regard to such functions in which the Constitution specifically gives him discretion ; but during the constitutional crises in Bengal, Bihar and Punjab, the discretionary powers of the Governors were interpreted in such a manner as to enable them to remove the non-Congress Ministries from office, and much was made of the provision that the Council of Ministers "shall hold office during the pleasure of the Governor."

Further, the Constitution provides that the Chief Minister will be appointed by the Governor, and since the Chief Minister and his Council of Ministers are answerable to the Legislative Assembly and can function only as long as they enjoy its confidence, a convention has evolved that the leader of the majority party or someone claiming support of the majority alone would be called upon to form the Government ; all that the Governor has to do before appointing the Chief Minister is to satisfy himself that the person concerned enjoys the support of the majority.

Yet, in Rajasthan the Governor used his discrimination which the Constitution as also convention have restricted, to delay formation of the Government to give time to the leader of the Congress to win over Opposition members. In Bengal the Governor was permitted to entertain doubts about the extent of support for the Government even before it could be tested in the Assembly.

In Bihar the Governor also wanted to be assured that the non-Congress parties could form a stable Government although in the Constitution there is no reference to stability of the support enjoyed by a prospective Chief Minister at the time he is called upon to form a Government. And in U.P. the Governor went a step further and wanted that the non-Congress parties should satisfy him that they could raise enough resources to implement certain plans and that their programmes and policies would permit them to do so ; the Constitution does not give the Governor any power to examine the policies and programmes of the party or parties forming a Government, for it is to the Assembly and to the electorate which has voted them that they are answerable in regard to their policies and programmes.

It is in this context that the Home Minister's remarks at the Governors' conference about the need for a strong Centre and his emphasis on the unitary aspects of our federal Constitution, should be viewed. Sri Chavan's remarks were based on the premise that it was the responsibility of the Centre to ensure stability in the States and to "preserve, protect and defend" the Constitution. He forgot that the State Governments are also creatures of the Constitution and stable or not they too are charged by the Constitution

with the responsibility of upholding it. Further, the Constitution cannot be "preserved" etc. by back-stage manipulation and Home Ministry intrigues; the Constitution itself provides the mechanism for its preservation, and recourse to any other means to uphold it can be questioned on constitutional grounds.

In any case, the Government at the Centre is no more stable and no more strong than the State Governments which have fallen since the last general election. Not long ago the legal experts of the Government of India were engaged in studying a hypothetical problem which shows the character of its stability. The problem was whether the Prime Minister on his (or her) own could advise the President, to dissolve the Lok Sabha and order fresh elections, or whether such advice to be binding has to be tendered by the Council of Ministers. It was felt that in the States the right of the Chief Minister to give such advice to the Governor was limited; a Chief Minister who had lost his majority could not give any advice to the Governor while submitting his resignation, and the Governor need not accept the advice of the Chief Minister in regard to dissolution of the Assembly if he felt that the Chief Minister did not represent the views of his colleagues. But in case of the Centre, the Prime Minister's advice should be binding on the President whatever the circumstances, because the Constitution did not envisage a situation in which the President could function without the Prime Minister. When the opinion of the legal experts was known, some Congress leaders at the top tried to represent to the President that he should not be guided by the Prime Minister's advice unless it was backed by the Government as a whole.

Since then these Congress leaders have been anxious to avoid carrying their campaign against the Prime Minister to the point when she feels compelled to advise him to dissolve the Lok Sabha. In fact, to a considerable extent the fear of the Prime Minister insisting on seeking a fresh man-

date from the people before laying down office, is responsible for bringing about stability at the Centre. But before the legal experts discussed the problem rumours occasionally went round that this or that leader at the Centre might go the Charan Singh way. This also shows the hollowness of the claim of the Central Government about its strength. Its strength lies only in the fact that neither the parties of the Left nor the parties of the Right want it to go down, and if some persons defect from the ruling party either the Left or the Right will come to its rescue and keep it in power.

The strongmanship of some leaders at the Centre is meaningless in this situation, and can only create more difficulties in Centre-State relations. The Governors of Kerala and West Bengal in their speeches at the conference referred to the danger constituted by the growth of what they described as extremist elements and emphasised the need for dealing with them with a firm hand. They were obviously referring to the growth of Left extremism, for which a great deal of responsibility has to be borne by the strongmanship of the Central leaders and the arbitrary manner in which the Governors have behaved. It is because of the innate faith of the people in democratic processes that the Constitution is still working, although the Central leaders and the Governors have done their best to undermine the Constitution.

For instance, much hue and cry is raised when the Kerala Chief Minister talks of amending the Constitution so that it reflects the changed situation and enables radical institutional economic reforms, but the Centre is gradually encroaching into the areas reserved by the Constitution for the States. It has not only acquired the right to deploy the Central Reserve Police without even consulting the States and now wants to go a step further and seek powers for the CRP to launch prosecutions. It seems that instructions have been issued to heads of Central establishments in Kerala to contest applications by the State

Government to withdraw legal proceedings against persons arrested by the CRP in connection with the September 19 strike: thus a conflict between the Centre and the State is developing as a result of the Centre's attempts to encroach on the rights of the State under the Constitution.

The conflict which is now developing between the Centre and Kerala is not merely a constitutional problem; it is essentially a political problem and has to be tackled on the political plane. It is a problem of the same nature as had arisen when the then Congress Government of West Bengal resisted the formation of the border security force under Central auspices. The Central Industrial Security Force which is now being created also contains the seeds of a similar problem and it cannot be taken for granted that the Congress Governments in the States will take kindly to the force taking up law and order work in their territories. The need for the Industrial Security Force arose because of divergence in the labour policies of the Centre and the States, and any attempt to force policies pursued by a Government at the Centre which does not enjoy the support of the majority of the people, on popular State Governments is bound to lead to a political crisis, the only way to avoid which is to create a machinery for resolving differences between the Centre and the States. The Constitution provides for the establishment of a Council to resolve Centre-State disputes and Sri Namboodiripad has accused the Centre of failure to set up such a Council. Some time back the proposal to set up the Council was discussed at a Chief Ministers' conference and also in the Rajya Sabha, but on both occasions the Home Ministry opposed it. But in the event of the failure of the Centre to work for resolution of differences with the States, the demand for the convening of a new Constituent Assembly to revise the Constitution so as to make it impossible for the Centre to encroach on the rights of the States, is bound to grow.

—G.M.

Moghuls' Picnic . . .

ON November 10 was celebrated, with regal fanfare, the inauguration of the Bailadila Iron Ore Project in the heart of the adivasi country in Madhya Pradesh.

The Bailadila range extends over a stretch of 30 miles, containing the finest quality of iron ore in the world. On November 10, Commerce Minister Sri Dinesh Singh inaugurated Deposit Number 14, in the Bailadila range.

The National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) is in charge of the project. The iron ore raised from this Deposit is to be exported to Japan and thereby the country is supposed to earn foreign exchange. However, some of the calculations available make startling economics: by exporting iron ore to Japan, India gets Rs 73 per tonne. But the total cost per tonne comes to Rs 74.50; the break-up is as follows: cost of production is Rs 20; railway freight Rs 33.50; port charge Rs 9; Government of India duty Rs 10.50; Madhya Pradesh Government royalty Rs 1.50.

The NMDC authorities however are optimistic that they will soon be able to reduce the cost of production to Rs 17 or even to Rs 16 per tonne, from the present figure of Rs 20. How this will be done is yet to be seen—perhaps the idea is to put some squeeze on the workers and employees.

Leaving aside NMDC arithmetic, it is worth noting how economically the inaugural function was arranged.

For the grand occasion, the project management had provided in their budget the modest sum of Rs 3 lakhs. But actual expenditure perhaps more than doubled that modesty: one would not be surprised if it is found that Rs 7 lakhs or more had been spent on the occasion.

Six planes were chartered to fly out the VIPs, including Ministers and the Japanese guests, from Delhi. A spectacular fleet of cars—mostly Impala class—came for the show. A press party was taken by train all the way from Calcutta—with all the usual lavish hospitality en route. And of course luxury buses and all that.

The General Manager's bungalow and the guest house at Bailadila were specially furnished for the occasion. A paltry sum of Rs 75,000 was spent for the purpose.

Lunch and dinner parties were on a magnificent scale. Catering was done by a posh restaurant of Calcutta (only 700 miles away) and by another restaurant in Vishakhapatnam (300 miles away). These were no ordinary meals: per head per meal cost was only Rs 78—I repeat Rs 78.

The Indian Navy band was taken there all the way from

Vishakhapatnam. There was music and dance and an overflow of Scotch.

The management spared no pains to put up this never-to-be-forgotten show: they could mobilise a labour gang of 150 to work round the clock for three days to repair the 80-mile road from Kirindul to Jagdalpur.

With Rs 78-per-meal hospitality, the pressmen were uncomfortable, at least some of them: the sweeper at the building where they were put up told them that he had been paid nothing extra—nor was he given any food.

And beyond—in the nearby villages—hunger is the normal lot of the adivasi families, and starvation is commonplace. While the men who are supposed to sell on their behalf the wealth scratched out of *their* good earth, had no scruples about squandering public sector cash on lavish vulgarity.

This guilty tribe of *sabhibs* and *burra sabhibs* go scot free—only the half-starved Government employee loses his job when he protests and the pauperised kisan is shot if he angrily claims the land he tills as his own.

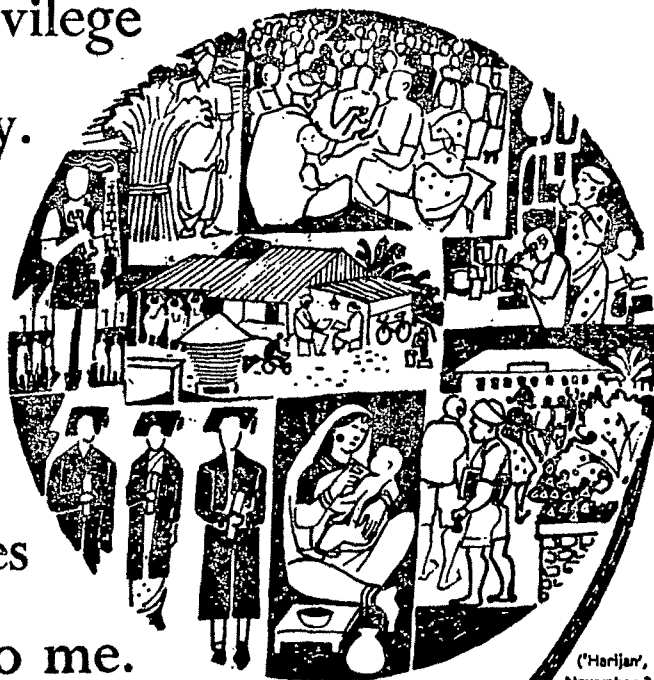
The ethics of the Modern Moghul...

— ONLOOKER

No discrimination

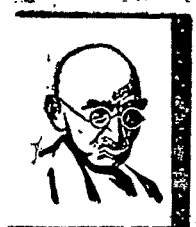
6 I hate privilege
and monopoly.

Whatever
cannot be
shared with
the masses
is taboo to me.



(*'Harijan'*,
November 2,
1938)

MAHATMA GANDHI



**MAHATMA
GANDHI
BIRTH CENTENARY
OCT. 2, 1968 TO
FEB. 22, 1970**
**महात्मा
गांधी**
जयं शताब्दी
अक्टूबर 2, 1968 से
फरवरी 22, 1970

Gandhi Versus the Duumvirate

P. GOVINDA PILLAI

FOR three decades Mahatma Gandhi strode the Indian scene like a giant. A study and understanding of this historic phenomenon is an absolute necessity if one has to know anything of modern and contemporary India.

But as we delve deeper into this rich and varied history of our country, this giant who dominated the arena for so long eludes easy definition or categorisation or assessment. I am leaving for the present the attempts at deifications indulged in by those who are dumbfounded by the magnificence and inscrutabilities of the phenomenon of Gandhi and resort to the easy course of worshiping at his altar and lose themselves in ecstasies of extremes. I would confine myself to the problem faced by those who try to assess him from a so-called Left angle.

For long it had been usual in Left circles to identify Gandhi with the conservative and Right wing in the nationalist movement in general and Indian National Congress in particular. Gandhiji's revivalist proclivities and opposition to modern science and technology certainly afford the ideological basis for such categorisation. Gandhi's practice of class collaboration which naturally follows from his famous "Trusteeship" theory of the capitalist-labour relations and reformist attitude to the problem of depressed classes in India, etc. are certainly points one cannot ignore in this respect. His organisational identification with "no-changers" as against the Swarajists in the early twenties, the role he played thwarting the socialist resurgence in the thirties and his open association with the Right wing in their challenge to the militant nationalism of Subhash Bose in the thirties, are supposed to show not only his ideological affinities but organisational commitments, in favour of the Right. The avowed Rightists in the Congress like Rajagopalachari, Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Pattabhi Sitharamayya, Kripalani and others received not only spiritual sustenance but also organisational protection from the benevolence of the Mahatma. Gandhi was able to swim against the rising tide of militant nationalism by withdrawing the struggle after chauri-chaura, signing the Gandhi-Irwin Pact and launching the individual Satyagraha in the

early twenties, thirties and forties respectively because of the staunch and even blind support of these Right-wing stalwarts. These and many other factors came in handy for those who adopt the easy course of dumping him in the Rightist bandwagon and finishing the job there.

But there are certain factors which challenge such easy and dogmatic categorisations and assessments. For the purpose of this paper I am confining myself to one phase, incidentally the last phase of Gandhi. During this phase Gandhi took certain positions which had more in common with the left wing outside the Congress than with either the Left or Right in the Congress. The difference between Right and Left in the Congress during these days was blurred and both tended to coalesce. I also think that Gandhiji's role in these two or three crucial years summarises his entire career, views, failures and victories. I am more reporting here than commenting or analysing.

II

ON August 14-15, 1947 at the stroke of mid night in Jawaharlal Nehru's famous words, "when all the world was asleep India awoke to freedom." We had a "Tryst with Destiny" he said. When the hated Union Jack slithered down the mast and the Tricolour rose triumphantly at that dawn of freedom, the millions of this ancient land worked themselves to an ecstasy of fulfilment at the impassioned oratory of Jawaharlal Nehru. The galaxy of veteran leaders who were "out of dust made unto men" by the magic wand of Mahatma, flanked to the left and right of Jawaharlal. Many did not realise at that moment the significant absence at rostrum of one man, Gandhiji. But a few realised, and among them were the Duumvirs of the late forties of Indian history, Nehru and Patel. Gandhiji did not come and did not even condescend to send a message.

Gandhiji's biographer says: "There were festivities all over the land. But the man who, more than anyone else has been responsible for freeing India from alien rule did not participate in these rejoicings. When an officer of the Information and Broadcasting department of the Government of India came for a message, Gandhi replied that 'he had run dry'. When told again that if he did not give any message,

The author is the Editor of the Malayalam daily of the Communist Party (Marxist), Deshabhimani. This paper was presented at the Seminar on Gandhi: Theory and Practice, held at the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies Simla, in October, 1968.

it would not be good, Gandhi replied : "There is no message at all, if it is bad, let it be so." (Tendulkar, *The Mahatma*, Vol. VIII, 1st Edn. pp. 95-6.)

Gandhiji gave poignant expression to his disappointment again and again before he met his martyrdom. Four days before he was murdered he said on his last Independence Day : "Now ! We have handled it (Independence) and we seem to be disillusioned. At least I am, even if you are not." (*Ibid* p. 338.)

III

AS a matter of fact his disappointment and anguish began quite some time before the dawn of Independence. With his unerring political realism and sensitive finger on the pulse of the people, Gandhiji sensed the holocaust of communal fury and destruction that was to accompany freedom. He was sceptical about the outcome of the negotiations between the British representatives and Indian leaders. He opposed the partition of India. This was not because of any animosity towards Muslims, as in the case of Akhand Hindustanis, but because he thought it was a cure worse than the disease. He even advocated handing over power entirely to the Muslim League if that could save India from communal war. Gandhiji's epic trek in Noakhali, and his final fast and the heroic fight he put up with Sardar Patel and the Congress Cabinet to pay up the treasury balances to Pakistan, prove beyond doubt his honourable intentions towards the Muslim community in India and the Muslim state that had been newly formed.

It is true that the religious and ethical overtones that Gandhi gave to his political pronouncements and style in a way indirectly affected the secularism of Indian politics. But Gandhiji, subjectively was never a party to communalism and sectarianism. In this connection we have to demarcate him from the extremists of the early decades of this century like Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh and others. As a perspicacious author observes :

"In spite of the similarity between these broad statements made by Gandhi and the extremists there were many differences between him, and the latter. While the extremist leader maintained that they were primarily inspired by *Bhagawat Gita* and other Hindu religious texts, Gandhi acknowledged his indebtedness to the scriptures of other religions also ..

"Gandhi's attempt to blend religion, morals and politics was aimed at making an appeal to the masses of the Indian people as a whole and not to a particular sect or community. Another one of his objectives was to give the movement a unique sense of self-discipline which was necessary for the success of non-violent non-co-operation movement on a rational scale. Gandhi's concept of the role of religion in politics was more broad based than that of the extremists. He rarely made use of such terms as 'Hindu Nation' and 'Hindu Solidarity.' But many of his expressions such as 'Rama Rajya' had an appeal only to the Hindu masses ; his programme and utterances, however, never antagonised

the Muslim masses during 1916-21." (K.P. Karunakaran, *Continuity and Change in Indian Politics*, pp. 138-9.)

IV

THE limitations of nationalist politics and its assumptions coupled with the intricacies of Indian situation and manoeuvring of the alien rulers during the next decades certainly cut adrift the Muslim community from the mainstream of the Indian struggle. But Gandhiji's name and personality attracted the confidence and affection of the Muslim masses in the crucial years of the transfer of power and transition. But he did not in this period have the magic and power which he had wielded with phenomenal effect during those early years, 1916 to 1921. He was at the fag end of his career, and it was too late. He was between Scylla of separatist Muslim communalism and the charybdis of power politics personified in his two beloved disciples, Sardar Patel and Pandit Nehru.

The former was famed for his political and organisational attachment to him, the latter for his spiritual affinity and ultimate obedience, in spite of ideological gulf. But both united from the Left and Right to oppose their mentor and leader at the most crucial moment in India's history. Nehru's political biographer writes :

"Nehru's crucial role in the great decision (Partition) is confirmed by many who witnessed and participated in the momentous events of the spring and summer of 1947. On the Congress side it was he and Patel who carried the party in favour of Partition, however reluctantly. In a sense Nehru was the decisive member of the triangle of Congress leaders, for while Patel controlled the machine he could never have won the majority in favour of the Mountbatten Plan, had Nehru opposed and stood by Gandhi. By supporting Patel, Nehru tilted the Congress balance in favour of division of the country. By that time they were the two dominant figures in the Congress, Gandhi having been pushed to the periphery in terms of decision-making. It was ironic that, having followed him faithfully for almost thirty years, with very few exceptions, Nehru and Patel should have broken with the master on the most significant issue affecting India in modern history" (Michael Brecher, *Nehru, A Political Biography* p. 375).

But the 'irony' is only apparent not real. The inexorable laws of political and social evolution asserted at a crucial moment in history, when the question of power was placed on the agenda for immediate decision. The rising ruling-class leadership now personified in the Duumvirate of Nehru and Patel, did not wish to take a risk. Any gambling for higher stakes might result in riding a slippery path.

Gandhi's solution seemed to them, offered such a path. Brecher continues :

"Gandhi was heart-broken by the decision. However, he did not attempt to challenge his disciples. Apparently the Mahatma favoured a final resort to civil disobedience...Patel and Nehru were

firmly opposed to another mass campaign." (*Ibid* pp. 375-6.)

Here we see the Great Divide in the Congress history—from broad mass politics to narrow class politics. Thus the Gandhi era came to a close even before his illustrious life did. The Duumvirate of early years of Independence took absolute command and the politics thereafter, even after the exist one of the duumvirits in 1950 never lost its indelible stamp.

V

A strong critic of Gandhi pays this tribute to Gandhi's role during that phase :

"It is characteristic of Gandhiji, that while all this lieutenants were celebrating the attainment of complete Independence, he was more concerned with the instability of the newly-created Indian state than feeling happy at its formation. While the other leaders of the Congress were acclaiming the transfer of power as the triumph of Indian national movement under their leadership, he made it his job to draw the people's attention to the two main sources of India's political instability : *firstly* the strained relations between Hindus and Muslims, which in its turn led to strained relations between the two newly-created states of India and Pakistan ; and *secondly*, the decay and degradation inside the Congress organisation." (E.M.S. Namboodripad, *The Mahatma and the Ism*, p. 111.)

Even after twenty years of freedom, the maladies India suffers from can be traced to these two factors. It goes to the credit of Gandhiji that only he could perceive with clear insight in those formative years the shape of things to come.

As on the question of Hindu-Muslim and India-Pakistan relations, Gandhiji's advice on the Congress reorganization also was rejected by his disciples. Gandhiji's famous draft for reorganisation of the Congress advised its dissolution as a political body and the reorganisation of it as a Lok Sevak Sangh.

After twenty years of freedom we see the communal problem still alive, aggravated further in the form of tribal revolts and other centrifugal tendencies. Indo-Pakistan relation is still where it was, if not worse. The Congress organization which has outlived its purpose, and unable to fulfil its professed role, is facing a forced disintegration, breaking up into shambles with none else to fill up the vacuum. As a result of all these, India's future is hanging in the air, national stability and strength still eluding our grasp.

VI

GANDHI'S solutions may be controversial, but his diagnosis was perfect. His solution of a mass civil disobedience, a mass movement to shape our future nearer to our heart's desire, and his opposition to compromises under extraneous pressure and the lure of immediate power seem sound.

Gandhi's idea of a mass movement certainly has its limits. As a matter of fact this limitation is

sought to be covered up by lack of clarity and a sort of mystic aura around the concept of Satyagraha. Pattabhi Sitaramayya wrote : "Mass civil disobedience was the thing that was luring the people. What was it ? What would it be ? Gandhi himself never defined it, never elaborated it, never visualised it even to himself". (*History of the Indian National Congress*.)

Subhash Bose criticised Gandhi's method of mass struggle as a means to power: "Either he did not want, to give out all his secrets prematurely or he did not have a clear conception of the tactics whereby the hands of the Government could be forced". (*The Indian Struggle 1920-34*.)

Nehru too shared the views of the critics : "Gandhiji was delightfully vague on the subject, and he did not encourage clear thinking about it either." (*Autobiography*.)

But out of all these mystic and delightful vagueness, one thing stands out : Gandhi's struggles are often a prelude to compromises and so necessarily must confine themselves to well-defined contours drawn by the leader. Even on the eve of transfer of power, when Gandhi visualised the need of a movement, he did not think it expedient to courage post-war upsurges like the RIN revolt and the Postal strike.

VII

IN spite of this there is evidence to show that Gandhi after 1942 was certainly different from Gandhi after Chauri Chaura and Gandhi of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact and Gandhi of the individual satyagraha days. The violence of the Quit India Movement did not deter the leader and he did not condemn the people as was his wont. On the contrary he put the blame squarely on the authorities who unleashed "leonine violence." It is interesting to note that he even foresaw such possibilities.

On the eve of the 1942 struggle, Gandhi had a conversation with the American journalist Louis Fischer. Gandhi talked of mass struggle of peasants and even forcible seizure of Zamindar's land. It is recorded thus :

"With violence ?" Fischer asked.

"There may be violence" Gandhi replied, "but then again, landlords may co-operate."

"You are optimist," Fischer remarked.

"They might co-operate by fleeing" Gandhi said

"Or" Fischer said "they might organise violent resistance."

"There may be fifteen days of chaos" Gandhi said, "but I think we would soon bring that under control".

As E.M.S. Namboodiripad says : "We would, however, be wrong from this to conclude that Gandhiji had visualised a real revolutionary struggle of the people", for he did not care to make any preparations for such a struggle. Still we can see that as days passed by, unlike his colleagues who became tired and conservative, Gandhiji kept his fire burning, brighter and brighter. This attitude of Gandhiji was quite different from that of his younger colleagues

and disciples. Brecher was correct when he described the mental climate of the leaders like Nehru and Patel at the time of transfer of power: "For those who have been in opposition most of their political life, the prize of power is tempting. The Congress leaders had already tasted its fruits and were naturally reluctant to part with it at the moment of triumph". (*op. cit.* pp. 378-9.)

Hence they parted company with their preceptor and satisfied themselves with worshipping at his paltar and singing his praises rather than follow his path. The result was disaster, though not immediate, sure, slow and corroding.

VIII

WE have seen that the most effective undoing of Gandhiji's plan was the work of Nehru, whom he affectionately designated his successor. But Gandhiji's quarrel with Patel in those days was fierce, though mostly behind the scenes. Patel was all along a tower of strength to Gandhiji from the days of Bardoli satyagraha which crowned him as the Sardar. He was a pliant but effective tool in Gandhiji's hands for his handlong clashes with rebels like Chittaranjan Das and later Subhash Bose and Nariman—militant nationalists and socialists in general. On the Hindu-Muslim question, Gandhi and Patel were poles apart, and the bellicose stand of Patel cut Gandhi deep.

On the question of payment of balances to Pakistan the relation between the teacher and disciple became very strained. Gandhi had to undertake a fast not against aliens or the sin of the masses, but mainly against the intransigence of his disciples. Still Patel defied his aged and fasting master.

Brecher records the moving scene: "Gandhi lay flat on his back, weak and silent. There was no response. Then Patel began again. After a few minutes Gandhi raised himself slowly, with tears streaming down his cheeks. Turning to Patel, he said in a barely audible whisper: "You are not the Sardar I once knew", and then fell back. (*op. cit.* p. 383.)

The visit ended abruptly, and of course Gandhi won and the sum was paid to Pakistan.

IX

GANDHI was above the groups, and though certain groups and persons struck to him, he kept himself above, away from the squabbles below. His strength was his faith in the masses and his solutions too often were mass actions. He combined mass action with clever negotiations and he had a knack to open the mouth of the most tight-lipped opponent. His correspondence and negotiation with Lord Irwin, M.A. Jinnah, Lord Linlithgow and many others will ever remain master strokes of political negotiations and manoeuvre, even when their immediate results seemed disappointing.

After the First World War Gandhi took politics of freedom to the fields and streets and thus inaugurated the new era in Indian politics. Not only did he teach the masses to organize and fight, but he also learned from them.

Hear the touching references he makes to some of his followers in the South African struggle. Gandhiji was replying to an address of welcome at Madras in 1915:

"If one-tenth of the language that has been used in this address is deserved by us, what language do you propose to use for those who have lost their lives, and, therefore, finished their work on behalf of your suffering countrymen in South Africa? What language do you propose to use for Nagappan and Narayana Swamy, lads of seventeen and eighteen years, who braved in simple faith all the trials, all the sufferings and all the indignities for the sake of the honour of our Mother land? What language do you propose to use with reference to Valliamma, a sweet girl of sixteen years, who was discharged from Motisburg prison, skin and bone, suffering from fever to which she succumbed after about a months time. You have said that I inspired those great men and women, but I cannot accept the proposition." (*Tendulkar, op. cit.* nd. I.)

Gandhiji gave them the credit for inspiring him and not *vice-versa*. Not only that. He mingled with the lowliest and the lost and lived like them and shared their lives and miseries. As stated in his eloquent reply to the famous criticism made by Poet Tagore, Gandhiji respected the primary and simple needs of human existence as sacred. It is therefore that he said that even God would appear before a hungry man only in the form of bread. But he understood the needs of the poor folk in a general and humanitarian way and not as higher wages for the worker; security against retrenchment; reduction of land rentlet alone the abolition of wage slavery and private property in land and other forms of wealth.

These limitations are granted. But the Nagappans and Valliammas of the late sixties of India are still awaiting their inspirer. The kindly light that lit up, however feebly, the thousands of dark villages of India was blown off cruelly at the dawn of freedom. Those villages still remain dark. The strong voice to protect our minorities has since been never heard. When we look up to Gandhiji, during the present struggles and tribulation we learn a lot, we critically reject a lot. But in this process of study and assessment, easy categorisations and definitions lead us nowhere. On many crucial issues our country is facing today, I consider Gandhi relevant.

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Gandhi : New Perspectives

DEV DUTT

THE Gandhi birth centenary celebrations have begun. Understandably, rituals of one kind or another will form an essential part of these programmes. However, it is not unlikely that efforts will also be made to re-examine the heritage of Gandhi in order to separate the redundant from the relevant, the topical from the fundamental and the mythical from the real.

This is very essential. In India specially, the available modes of thought and idioms of action appear to have outlived their relevance; there is no alternative frame-work of ideas in view. In this void, the forces of religion and revivalism are working furiously to stage a come-back. Those who control the levers of power and patronage are exploiting this situation for their gains. The Indian social situation itself is rather moribund—national issues such as federal relations, language, education, prohibition, planning and foreign policy, which should have been settled long ago, are being reopened time and again and allowed to remain in that stage. The leadership, absorbed in the politics of management, either procrastinates or waits, like Micawber, for something good to turn up from somewhere.

It is clear that India needs fresh sources of renewal, infusion of new ideas and an audacious sense of destiny. It is not unprobable that a critical reappraisal of Gandhi may lead us to discovering these sources of strength.

Perhaps, with an awareness of these facts, the Indian Institute of advanced Study, Simla, under the leadership of its Director, Dr. Niharranjan Ray—a scholar with a composite vision of our culture, history and contemporary society—organized a seminar on "Gandhi : Social Impact and Contemporary Relevance" from October 13 to 26.

More than 40 men of action, men of ideas, scholars, writers and teachers of various persuasions—professed and devout Marxists, so-called heretical Gandhians, fastidious researchers, confirmed liberals—belonging to several disciplines—economics, political science, constitutional law, sociology and history and literature—met and discussed at length the relevance of Gandhi for our times.

For some it must have been a sort of a voyage of exploration, in the course of which many stereotypes of Gandhi, so ossiduously built up either by his blind followers or by his avowed critics, or by those who use his name to legitimize their claim to power, were unmade, dismantled, modified or destroyed, and

Gandhi seems to have emerged in a new perspective which offered the promise of leading us out of this encircling uncertainty and gloom.

What are the details of this view of Gandhi ?

First, the *ashrams*, food fads, prayers, nature cure, basic education and *brahmacharya*—these do not constitute the core-elements of his philosophy; they are marginal to it. It is unfair to present him as a spiritual leader—a sort of an *avater*.

Secondly, no effort should be made to canonize or codify Gandhi's ideas into a formal system. He does not admit of being intellectualized beyond a point, because he was close to life—almost coterminous with it.

Thirdly, there is considerable evolution in his thought. To understand Gandhi is to understand the spirit which informs all these phases and all those aspects of his thought; it is to discover the common denominator of his ideas as reflected in his practice. For it is in Gandhi's life that we must look for authentic and comprehensive material and standards of reference to ascertain the truth of what is genuine and what is false in his ideas. His writings considered in abstraction or in isolation from the actual context are likely to be misleading.

Fourthly, in fact, no single concept, be it non-violence or truth or God, can be considered adequate to define the whole of Gandhi. Particularly, his philosophy of ends and means (for instance, the philosophy of non-violence), no doubt a very vital element of his thought, cannot be over-emphasized. In fact, it is an open question whether Gandhi accepted it as an absolute value. He, unlike his followers today, had no permanent inhibitions regarding the use of non-violence to realize a given social end. His approach was very pragmatic.

Fifthly, a definitive assessment of Gandhi has yet to be made. Several significant aspects of his heritage—particularly, all the facts about the last two years of his life, known only to a few of his close associates, are yet to be known to the public at large. The more people know about it, the better they will understand Gandhi and his teachings, and his associates.

He was completely and totally committed to the task of bringing about fundamental social changes in

favour of unprivileged humanity so that it could live in relative comfort, freedom and dignity. He was out to transform the basis of modern living. By implication, he seems to have pitted himself against the powerful forces of history, psychology and technology and to the task of initiating a new movement in the heart of contemporary civilization.

But this total commitment did not render Gandhi a starry-eyed idealist. He was ruthlessly practical too, not a captive of his own values. He seems to have been under no illusion about the quality of the people he had to work with—perhaps he knew that they were men of common clay, who forced either by circumstances or by fluke, were to become the instruments of national destiny. He, therefore, was ever willing to try the second-best alternative to deal with a given situation. Here lies the secret of his inventiveness and flexibility. He had the knack of using his disadvantages to advantage. He could be supremely detached from his values to be able to respond to a challenging situation with dignity and courage.

He could operate on two planes simultaneously : his idealism, besides being a source of strength to him as an individual, rendered the reality less degrading and less mean ; on the contrary, reality rendered his idealism practical, plausible and sober.

Thus his philosophy of life-affirmation. He was willing to do what was possible, accept what was feasible, work out what was practical at a particular time, and treat the immediate gain as a step to the realization of the ultimate ends, which he never forgot.

A few more facts came to light.

First, several men of ideas being not satisfied with the direction in which India is moving showed syndromes of anxiety. Secondly, they are all groping for a new style of thought and action with a sense of urgency. There is evidence of an inward movement to discover anchorage and sources of legitimization. For example, it appears that the Marxists are no longer inclined to dub Gandhi as anti-people, as an agent of capitalists or as an arch-reactionary. Some of them tend to speak in the accents of radical humanists. Some seem to see in him the qualities of a great revolutionary—an almost India version of Karl Marx. In fact, it was regretted that the progressive forces in India had failed to exploit the mass upsurge created by them.

Some of the Gandhians too are not disinclined to accept that. They too are de-emphasising some aspects of Gandhi and are discovering in his thought radical elements, even conceding that non-violence for him was not an absolute value.

These are significant developments. The Gandhi of ideologues, the Gandhi of hymn-singing *bhaktas*, the Gandhi of scissor and paste scholarship, the Gandhi of the Establishment and the Gandhi of conservatives all these are stereotyped images. They have to be discarded.

Once it is conceded that the essence of Gandhi does not wholly lie in his non-violence, that the essence of Gandhi does not lie in his written word, that as a phenomenon he cannot be replicated, and that we can only pick and select what will help us, it should not be difficult to agree to re-examine in further detail some selective aspects of his basic approaches in order to determine his relevance as a corrective to the maladies of our age.

Keeping in view these developments in the realm of ideas, in the light of the experience of the working of socialist and liberal institutions in India and elsewhere, realizing the sinister character of the long-term trends of the present technologically-oriented civilization, and believing that it is possible for human beings to change unitedly the course of history, feasibility of adopting the following elements derived from Gandhi's thought as a basis of fresh thinking and action, be considered.

(a) that consistent with the principle of justice and equity for all other sections of society, all social effort today should be directed towards the all-round development of the lowest of the lowliest (*i.e.* landless labourer, small peasants, petty craftsmen, untouchables, tribals etc. in terms of freedom, equality, independence and relative comfort) ;

(b) that this objective can be realised in a social order so framed as to allow for a wide measure of almost complete involvement and sustained participation of the individual in the political, social and economic and cultural processes ;

(c) that while retaining the vital but limited role of the state, the broad pattern of this new order would be in conformity with the principles of decentralisation of the political and economic institutions, the latter perhaps on voluntary co-operative lines ;

(d) that consistent with the spirit of our times, India should strive to build its cultural life on the basis of the value of constraint and indigenous sources ;

(e) that the task of promoting national unity is not a task that can be handled only by political prescription because it is a task which involves a reversal of the historical trends operating over nearly a thousand years and of which the most important elements are (i) involvement of religion with politics and law, (ii) disregard on the part of one section of the people for the sentiments of the other, (iii) built-in economic inequalities in general and regional inequalities in particular, (iv) absence of a truly comprehensive all-India consciousness which can only develop as a result of deeper and intimate inter-religious, inter-caste, inter-state (*e.g.* marriage etc.) growth of such institutions and in the field of education, health and culture, abolition of state domicile rules etc.

(f) that India should follow an independent foreign policy by so arranging the domestic policies that it is self-sufficient and self-reliant in food, shelter, clothing, education and security and culture.

Since the process of the elaboration of the details of this new order of ideas will involve considerable amount of discussion, clarification and experimentation, the intellectuals may undertake fundamental and operational research in the use of non-violent techniques in resolving inter-group conflicts (caste vs. out-caste, Hindu-Muslim) and for collective social action, with regard to communal harmony, and a close study of Gandhi's non-violent movements on the basis of all available data.

Pending the creation of conditions in which the ideals of new society can be achieved, it would be worthwhile taking such steps

as will mitigate the evils of the prevailing order. To begin with, we could campaign for the abolition of inheritance; for strict and honest and vigorous implementation of land reform; to consider the possibilities of evolving a new type of constructive programme to promote national culture; to avoid social waste, corruption etc.; to mobilize social forces for new experimentation in the field of education, customs and conventions, and to promote widespread political education of the people with a view to making them more self-conscious and preparing them for collective action as and when required.

Pakistan, Afghanistan and Pakhtoonistan

DEWAN BERINDRANATH

RELATIONS between Pakistan and Afghanistan have once again become strained. Rawalpindi has threatened to impose an economic blockade against Kabul if the latter does not "mend its ways regarding the Pakhtoon issue". There has also been a marked hardening of the Afghan attitude. A dramatic expression of the Afghan resentment against Pakistan was the speech by Dr. Pazhwak in the U.N. General Assembly. By countering Mr. Arshad Hussain's anti-India polemics on exactly the same grounds of argument, he neatly turned the tables against Pakistan.

The right of self-determination, for example, which Pakistan has been asking for Kashmir, she could not deny the same to the people under her own control. If Pakistan could not accept the verdict expressed in the four General Elections held in the State within the last twenty years, how could she flout the argument that the Pakhtoons of the former N.W. F.P. had expressed themselves

clearly and categorically through a referendum held in 1947.

Dr. Pazhwak pointed out that firstly the referendum had only given two choices—India or Pakistan. This was grossly unfair. The third alternative, that of independence was not allowed to them. Secondly, it was conducted under the aegis of a British Viceroy with the support of foreign guns. Thirdly, even in such an election, a majority of the people had boycotted it. Hence the verdict could not be taken either fair or final. About the position of the Pakhtoons in Pakistan where a Pakhtoon, President Ayub Khan, is supposed to head the government, the Afghan delegate caustically remarked that how was it that Pakistan was complaining about the maltreatment of minorities in India, in spite of a Muslim being the President!

Mr. Arshad Hussain's only answer could have come not directly from him, but from Rawalpindi. Pakistan felt visibly

stunned over the re-eruption of what has been described as 'Afghanistan's hostility and ungreatfulness'. It was pointed out that while Pakistan tried to do everything to accommodate economic interests of Afghanistan, she had not reciprocated in any substantial way Rawalpindi's gestures.

Pakistan, for example, had allowed overland transit facilities for the Afghan goods. This is now being stopped. It would mean a considerable economic hardship for a land-locked country whose major foreign-exchange earnings come through the exports of dry-fruits. It is, however, speculated that either Teheran or Moscow would intervene on Kabul's behalf to persuade Pakistan to show a more conciliatory attitude. But it is, doubtful, whether Rawalpindi would oblige the mediators. Kabul, in any case, seems to be ready for the eventuality of getting all her exports cut from the Eastern side. There is a possibility that she would start making use of Iranian ports and

would push on into the world market, lessening her dependence on the Indo-Pak sub-continent.

The only straw in the wind which indicates that eventually Rawalpindi might be persuaded to show greater understanding towards Kabul is the fact that the Pakistan may have to pay a heavy price for her annoyance by way of an increased tension on the Pak-Afghan frontiers. It is probable that once again Rawalpindi might try to bargain over the question of the transit facilities in exchange of Afghanistan's comparative silence over the Pakhtoon issue.

Political circles in Rawalpindi point out that this has been the case for the last five years. Afghanistan has been 'reasonably cautious' in her support of the Pakhtoonistan demand. A lip service had been paid to the Pakhtoon struggle by expressing sympathy here and there, but nothing substantial was supposed to have happened.

Things changed drastically when the King addressing the nation on the National Day in September this year bitterly complained over Pakistan's policy of "continued repression" against the Pakhtoons and declared categorically that Afghanistan could not ever remain a silent spectator to the struggle. He, however, expressed his wish that Pakistan may soon see "the path of reason and grant the right of self-determination to the Pakhtoons who had rendered great service in the cause of the freedom of the sub-continent". Failing that, the King feared unsavoury consequences not only for Pakistan and Afghanistan, "but for the whole area".

Some of the Pakistani journalists, who had gone to Kabul to cover the Independence Day celebrations, also noted a renewal of sentiments in favour of the Pakhtoon demand. Z.A. Sulehri, Editor of the semi-official Pakistan Times has "painfully" noted that even though different sections of the Afghan intelligentsia interpret the Pakhtoon demand in different ways, there is no denying that a vast majority of the Afghans have great sympathy for the Pakhtoonis-

tan issue.

Bitter Comments

Khwaja Shafi, a veteran journalist representing the Opposition view-point, was also at a loss to know what had gone wrong between Kabul and Rawalpindi "which has prompted such an exuberance of the Afghan sentiment in favour of a fantastic demand like Pakhtoonistan".

A general feeling of the Pakistani journalists has been that much could be attributed to the 'mischievous activities of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan' who has made Kabul the centre of his anti-Pakistan campaign. The fact that an important crossing in the city of Kabul was known as the 'Pakhtoonistan Chowk' and the Pakhtoonistan Day celebrations are held on an official scale, has also been bitterly commented upon by the Pakistani press.

In the beginning Rawalpindi tried to underplay the whole affair. The King's Speech was blacked out except for a small reference here and there. Following the speech, the Pakistani press tried to explain away the Afghan sentiment by saying that since Kabul has remained committed to the demand for the last twenty years, it was unthinkable that it would dissociate from it completely, but there was nothing to worry about: such expressions of sympathy with Pakhtoon demand were considered merely 'a ritualistic formality'.

Dr. Pazhwak's speech, however, changed the spectrum. The resentment against Kabul has been deep and widespread. A major reason is, of course, the feeling that the Afghan delegate lent a helping hand to India and thus his offence was unforgivable. Hence all the bitterness prevailing at the moment between the two States having Pakhtoon Heads of State (actually India too has a Pathan President).

It would, however, be a gross underestimating of the situation to feel that the present struggle is merely due to some diplomatic friction between the two countries. Neither could it solely be attributed to economic problems between Kabul and Rawalpindi. More

importantly, it seems is the impact of the struggle reaching its momentum in areas like the Frontier and the Baluchistan. It looks probable that the regime in Kabul even if it wanted to be conciliatory towards Rawalpindi, could not do so because of the pressures inside the country which are directly linked up Pakhtoon tribes across the borders. The Afghan attitude is also coloured by the fact that the ruling house is trying to identify more and more with the Pushtu-speaking people who constitute a large majority and are comparatively poor and backward than with the Persian-speaking class.

The anger of the Pushtu-speaking people both in Afghanistan and Pakistan is born out of the attitude of high-handedness which Rawalpindi has pursued towards the Pakhtoon struggle. The regime of President Ayub Khan has never been lenient towards such demands. The first important act of President Ayub Khan, on assumption of power ten years ago, was to suppress the so-called revolt of Khan of Kalat, who was supposed to have declared his independence. A conservative estimate puts the number of casualties suffered by royalist supporters of the Khan at about 500 people. The Khan was de-throned and the fort was captured. But the sentiments against Rawalpindi have remained unebbed. The younger brother of the late Amir, Prince Karim has been in jail for the last ten years without any charges being brought against him. In the last week of October, he was released by the High Court on a Habeus Corpus petition. But his re-arrest remains very much on cards.

The technique of re-arrest has already been applied in case of Khan Abdul Samad Khan who was released and re-arrested within a fortnight in May this year. The Baluch leader has been in prison almost continuously since the inception of Pakistan. Obviously, a regime which in the words of Governor of West Pakistan, General Musa, feels itself "safely and securely settled in the hearts of the people of Pakistan" would not resort to such measures

of high-handedness.

Earlier still in 1964, it was alleged on the floor of the National Assembly by a man no less than Sardar Bhadur Khan, a younger brother of the President himself, that the Pakistani Air Force had gone into action against the unarmed Baluchs and had bombarded even an Id congregation. The allegation was denied, but the challenge to face an independent enquiry was not accepted by the regime. Radio Kabul, in its recent news-cast, has once again been quoting instances after instances of the involvement of the Pakistani Air Force in the campaign against the Pakhtoons, especially in Baluchistan. There is thus clear indication that things have become so serious that ordinary military or police action is not considered satisfactory.

Glaring Instances

Glaring instances of the Pakhtoon resentment against the policies of the Central Government have come to light in recent months. A major sensation, for example, was created in May this year, when speaking in the West Pakistan Assembly, a number of agitated members talked about 'a wave of anti-Punjabi riots in Quota'. It was also alleged that so strong was the resentment against the non-Pakhtoon elements that Punjabis had to pay over 3,000 rupees per bus-seat for getting out of the troubled area. The allegations remain undenied by the Treasury benches. The disclosures, however, tore the curtain which the Government had tried to put over the so-called Quota incidents by ordering the newspapers to black out all news about them.

Following the debate in the Provincial Assembly, West Pakistan Governor came out with the statement that Quota had indeed been in the grip of regional riots and was under curfew for the last one month. It remained under that for the following 12 weeks as well.

Standard Practice

As is the standard practice with the Pakistani rulers, the incidents were alleged to be the handi-

work of 'antinational elements working in collusion with foreign countries'. It was also insinuated that riots were instigated by the smugglers who were carrying on their nefarious activities on a large scale in connivance with high-ups in Kabul. Quota has become a smugglers' paradise and one could buy any foreign goods ranging from the Russian sugar to the American refrigerators. How such items like refrigerators could be smuggled through and sold openly, remain unexplained. The pro-Pakhtoon elements, however, denied the allegations that they had anything to do with the smuggling activities. It was pointed out that this was being done through a direct liaison between the smugglers and high-ups among the Pakistani Customs authorities.

Leaving this digression apart, there is no denying that the countryside has been seething with discontent from quite sometime. Another expression of the Government's discomfiture over the 'Baloch revolt' was a wave of arrests which began with the re-arrest of Khan Abdul Samad Khan and had continued unabated. According to an official spokesman, the number of the arrested is about 100. Unofficial estimates however put the figure many times larger. An important arrest in the former NWFP was that of Sardar Mohammed Akbar Bugti, who had never been associated with the Pakhtoonistan movement as such. In fact, he was once considered a trusted lieutenant of President Ayub Khan and was made the first Minister of State for Defence in his Cabinet.

Sardar Bugti was arrested on charges which include :

- (a) attempts to raise a private army of the Pathans to wrest power from the Central Government;
- (b) liaison with foreign powers for subversive activities in the border areas, and
- (c) plans for assassination of important Pakistani leaders.

In tone and substance, the charges were similar to those against Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman and his colleagues facing a trail

in Dacca. In the case of Sardar Bugti, no trial was considered necessary and he has been detained under the Defence of Pakistan Rules.

In the areas of Baluchistan and NWFP, the Government has powers in addition to the Defence of Pakistan Rules in the form of special rules and regulations governing the administration in those areas. They are a hang-over of the old British days and have vehemently been opposed by the popular movement for the last 50 years. The Central Government has tried to fight the challenge of the Pakhtoon aspirations on two different plans of approach. One is of pure repression. This is being practised in the shape of "reprisal raids on Pakhtoon hide-outs, collective fines on Baloch and Pakhtoon villages and large scale arrests and imprisonments".

Simultaneously, Rawalpindi has tried to consolidate its hold by doling out large slices of patronage to some influential feudal lords in the areas. This is exactly in line with the old British practice of making the tribal chiefs as the main links of their administration in Baluchistan and the NWFP.

Following the same policy, the Government has tried to entice the present Khan of Kalat and the rules of Dir and Anb states. It might be mentioned that unlike the process of integration in India, princely states in Pakistan expect those of Bahawalpur and Khairpur, have been left untouched by way of their internal administration. The Khan of Kalat, for example, has been made the Chief Adviser to the Governor for the Tribal Affairs. Rulers of Anb and Dir have been given special privileges and their position of being almost semi-independent sovereigns has been recognised.

New pensions and monetary doles have also been arranged for a large number of the privileged Pathans and Baloch sardars mainly with a view that they could keep the people under check. General Musa, who himself belongs to a Persian-speaking Pathan tribe, has been particularly

active in going round the area and exhorting the people to see the nefarious conspiracy being hatched in Kabul and New Delhi. Meanwhile, Rawalpindi seems to have launched a great propaganda war against Afghanistan dubbing Kabul as a lackey of New Delhi.

Kabul-New Delhi Axis

There has also been a growing talk of the Kabul-New Delhi axis against Pakistan. It may be recalled that even during the early years of Pakistan such allegations were made frequently. Their renewal indicates that the problem of about eight million Pakhtoons settled in the Tribal belt as well as in areas like Baluchistan and NWFP remains far from settlement.

Contrary to the general impression which Rawalpindi has tried to give about the popularity of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, he seems a major factor to contend with. This has been indicated when President Ayub, while speaking in Mardan went out of his way to call him names by describing him in terms like 'a renegade and a traitor'. The policy till now was that he should be politically killed through a conspiracy of silence. Taking the cue from the boss the Pakistani press has launched a virulent campaign against Badshah Khan. Stories are published daily in the Pakistani press magnifying sentiments expressed in India in favour of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and his struggle. In spite of this campaign of character assassination, how strong is his influence evident, from the fact that a major probability as the opposition candidate against the Field Marshal Ayub Khan, is Khan Abdul Wali Khan, Badshah Khan's son. He was recently elected the President of the Nationalist or the anti-Chinese wing of the National Awami Party. There are indications that he might eventually be acceptable to all Opposition groups as an alternative to the present incumbent of the office.

Keeping his national commitments in mind, Abdul Wali Khan has outlined his concept of Pakhtoonistan only as an autonomous unit in Pakistan. The

Government-controlled press however is calling this posture as a mere facade and is trying to give the impression that he too like his father want an independent state of his own. Whatever might be the exact position, there is no denying that the Pakhtoon issue has made few notable gains.

First, the popular struggle as an expression of the suppressed nationalism of the Baloches and the Pakhtoons has been intensified.

Secondly, internal bickerings between the Balochs and the Pakhtoons seem to have been ironed out and a strong united front has been forged.

Thirdly, Afghanistan appears to have made up its mind to commit itself once again over the non-recognition of the Durand Line—a position Kabul took in 1947 when it was the only country opposing the membership of Pakistan in the United Nations.

Fourthly, and perhaps most importantly from the point of view of Pakistani politics, the Pakhtoon issue no longer remains a scare for Pakistani politicians.

Contrary to the early years of the struggle, when there was a united front against such demands in the whole of Pakistan, now there seems to be large segments of the Opposition who want a solution of the problem and are supporting the aspirations of the Pakhtoons at least for internal autonomy.

This means that the Ayub regime would no longer be able to isolate the Pakhtoons from the general fabric of Pakistan's democratic movement and would find it extremely hard to continue with its policies of repression through campaigns of character assassination of leaders like Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and Khan Abdul Samad Khan. The next June months of the struggle would therefore, be worth watching.

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Twin Threat to Stability

K. M. P.

MALAYSIA and Singapore are in an exposed position, and the politics pursued by these states are not conducive to long-term stability. Malaysia has already faced one confrontation, and it is in the midst of another with the Philippines. Singapore had its mini-confrontation with Indonesia.

These two States are relatively the most prosperous in South-East Asia; Malaya's tin and rubber and Singapore's entrepot trade and booming export industries create an illusion, but the reality is very different. They are totally dependent on export trade and a depression in West Europe or America can have severe effects on the economy, and as the Foreign Minister of Singapore pointed out, behind the talk of South-East Asian co-operation each State is pursuing a policy of national aggrandizement and Malaysia, like Cambodia, is the principal victims.

The "Bumiputras"

Nor do Malaysia's internal policies give any hope of internal political stability. A multi-racial state in which the Malays who hold political power are only a small majority, the State is consciously and deliberately pursuing a policy of favourism to the "Bumiputras—children of the soil. The definition of Bumiputras excludes Indians and Chinese, whatever the length of their residence in the country or even if they have been established in the country for two or three generations. Thus only true Malays are first-class citizens in the new Malaysia, and the Government defends its policy on the ground

that the immigrant communities are at a more advanced level than the Malays who find it difficult to compete with them, Communities which do not enjoy full citizenship will not regard the state as their own and the favouritism shown to the Bumiputras stands in the way of Malaysian nationalism. At the same time, Kuala Lumpur is anxious to stress its Islamic personality; it is preparing to sponsor a Muslim Conference and establish a national religious department. About the Muslim conference Tunku Abdul Rahman said, "The conference is for the mutual benefit of Islamic countries in the long run and to spread the religion". The trend is clear: the conservative leaders of the United Malay National Organization who dominate the Alliance Government have decided to turn Malaysia into a closed society, where the Malay Muslim will be the privileged community.

Malaysia is already facing a serious communal situation. In the six West Coast States of mainland Malaysia—Johore, Malacca, Negri Sembilan, Selangor, Perak and Penang—the non-Malays outnumber the Malays. These six are the wealthiest and most developed in the country, and though the Malays of these states are relatively better off than Malays elsewhere, their position vis-a-vis the Chinese is inferior to that in any other state. The six have also the best facilities for education and professional training. Competition is fierce and this aggravates the communal situation. Yet more money is spent on these six states in order to improve the position of the Malays, leading to resentment not

only among the Chinese but also in the other states. The result has been that the Pan Malayan Islamic Party is slowly becoming influential in the North and the East. It is already established in Kalantan, and in the future might make inroads into the UMNO strongholds in the northern States. PMIP is a frankly chauvinist party, its aim is to create a Malay nation. It is with this party that the UMNO is engaged in competition, and this has led to a rightward shift in its own policies. It is unlikely that the UMNO will change in its policy in the near future and Malaysia will be unable to solve the contradiction between Malaysian and Malayan nationalism.

Advance Posts of The West

This contradiction is at the root of Malaysian weakness. Kuala Lumpur has tried to bring in external alliances as a counterweight to its internal weaknesses; even after British withdrawal it hopes that a British presence will be maintained. In any case, Australia and New Zealand have expressed their willingness to continue their defence commitments, and Canberra is considering the possibility of keeping another Mirage squadron in Malaya. Singapore and Malaysia will continue to be the advance posts of the West, but whether Australia willing to enlarge its commitments will depend on its ability to get a guarantee from Britain or the United States.

Singapore is in an even weaker position. Mr Lee might be delighted with the trade returns—in the first half of this year

foreign trade was running at a higher level than in any year since 1951—and the flow of investments. Singapore's development has been remarkable, the rate of growth during the last three years has been 9 per cent a year and the Prime Minister is optimistic that if it continues for another three years, the republic will be out of the woods. The prosperity is the result of the shipping, financial and commercial infra-structure left behind by Britain; Singapore remains the major entrepot of trade in South-East Asia and handles nearly 60 per cent of Indonesia's foreign trade. But both Malaysia and Indonesia are taking measures to reduce their dependence on Singapore and it is unlikely that Singapore will continue to enjoy this advantage for long. Secondly, Singapore, being a mere city state, lacks a national market for genuine industrialization. Its industries are export-oriented and will face severe competition in South-east Asian markets not only from the established industrial State, but also from the countries which are now embarking on a policy of industrialisation. It is unlikely that it will be able to build up sufficient strength to compete effectively and the present rate of growth might merely create a

sense of illusion.

The obverse side of the medal of rapid industrialisation has been the extremely harsh Industrial Relations Bill. The Lee government, in order to encourage foreign investments, has curbed the unions. It specifically debars trade unions from making any proposals to managements, on promotion, recruitment, internal transfer, retrenchment, reinstatement, reorganization, dismissal, on allocation and assignment of duties. In short, the so-called socialist Prime Minister of Singapore has deprived the trade unions of all rights, and the workers are now completely at the mercy of the managements. It is therefore possible that Singapore will face severe industrial unrest. Moreover, Singapore since it became independent, is having to face the problem of defence expenditure. Finance Minister Goh King Swee said that by the end of 1969 defence expenditure would be running at the rate of 10 per cent of the gross National Product and will lead to increased taxation and strict control over non-defence expenditure. Thus, Singapore's growth rate and stability will depend on factors beyond control.

Even more significant is the conflict between Singapore's English-educated and Chinese-

educated Chinese. It is the English-educated with Lee leading them who are now in power, but in the long run the Chinese-educated will have the decisive voice. In the universities there is already a significant number who look upon Mao as the new prophet. Lee has failed to handle the radical elements and they are the leaders of the Chinese-educated citizens. Already they are powerful, and it is only the rapid growth of the economy that has kept discontent at a minimum. If the promised economic miracle does not come off, or if the economy comes under severe strain, it will lead to the overthrow of Mr Lee. One cannot forget that Singapore is a Chinese city with a powerful working class and a well-organized radical movement. It might fall not to Communist China but to the local Chinese Communists. And a Communist Singapore can be a pistol at Malaysia, for the six western States of mainland Malaysia have not only a large Chinese population but also close links with the Singapore Chinese. It is Singapore and Malaysia, because of their internal weaknesses, that pose the greatest threat to the stability of South-East Asia.

(To be Continued)

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Rich and Poor in Punjab

Economic Analysis of Consumption Expenditure

PRITAM SINGH

To gauge the impact of Plan Programmes, it is not enough to keep our eyes rivetted on National Income, we must know how the increased national wealth is getting distributed between different classes. In order to galvanise the enthusiasm of the people so that they put their shoulders to the wheels of economic progress, it is necessary to ensure equitable distribution of wealth among all the sections.

Punjab is the richest state in India. Its per capita income has

population of 203.7 lakhs, 49.65 lakhs people are in the expenditure group of Rs. 1-100. In other words, about one-fourth of the population is condemned to extreme poverty.

The data collected during the 17th Round of the National Sample Survey also reveals that in 1961-62 'Agricultural labour and allied groups' constituted 19.7 per cent, that is, one-fifth of the rural population. Per-capita monthly quantitative consumption

in the rural area. Again, per-capita monthly expenditure of this group on food, clothing, fuel and light in terms of rupees was the lowest, that is, Rs. 17.87 or 60 paise per day.

It has been estimated by S.S. Madalgi of the Division of Planning and Special Studies, Economic Department, Reserve Bank of India in his paper published in *Reserve Bank of India Bulletin*, January, 1967, that the per-capita daily requirement of calories from foodgrains in rural areas is 1800 and one seer of foodgrains yields 3213 calories. When the per-capita daily intake of calories from foodgrains is measured by this yardstick, it is found that the per-capita daily consumption of this group is 1468 whereas for all groups it is 1867 and for farmers, cultivators and allied groups and Tenant cultivators, it is 2098 and 2100 respectively. In the rural areas of Punjab, 'Agricultural labour and allied group' is the only socio-economic group which is undernourished.

registered a steady upward trend since the execution of various Plan Programmes in the State. It would be interesting to see how this rise in general prosperity has been shared by different sections of the people. This can be judged by analysis of consumption pattern of different expenditure groups. In 1961-62 the percentage distribution of rural and urban population according to household (monthly) expenditure was as per Table I :

This shows that more than one-fourth of rural population and more than one-fifth of urban population are in the household monthly expenditure group of Rs. 1-100. According to the 1961 Census, the rural population of the State was 162.18 lakhs and urban population was 40.89 lakhs. This means that out of a total

of rice, wheat and total cereals of this group was 13.70 seers which was the lowest when compared with the per-capita consumption of other socio-economic groups

In 1961-62, the per-capita monthly expenditure according to household (monthly) expenditure groups (in Rupees) both in rural and urban areas was as per Table II :

Table I

Household (monthly) expenditure group. (Rs.)	Rural	Urban
1-100	25.4	20.7
101-300	64.1	69.5
301-500	8.0	8.7
501 and above	2.5	1.1

(Source : 17th Round of National Sample Survey)

Table II

Household (monthly) expenditure group. (Rs.)	Urban		Rural	
	Percentage distribution of population	Per-Capita daily expenditure	Percentage distribution of population	Per-capita daily expenditure
1-100	20.7	.69	25.4	.58
101-300	69.5	.91	64.1	.90
301-500	8.7	1.79	8.0	1.57
501 and above	1.1	3.62	2.5	2.21
All groups		.97		.91

(Source : 17th Round N.S.S.)

This shows that more than one-fifth of the urban population and more than one-fourth of the rural population are spending only 69 paise and 58 paise respectively per-capita per day. It is also revealed that the same monthly expenditure group (Rs. 1-100) is worse off in the rural areas than in the urban areas. It is also significant to

note that about 90 per cent of urban as well as rural population is spending less than Rs. 1 per-capita per day.

So, this was the position in 1961-62 at the time of the Seventeenth Round of National Sample Survey. In order to see whether the economic conditions of low and middle income expenditure groups was bettered or

not with the passage of time, it is necessary to compare the data of consumption expenditure collected during the Seventeenth Round of NSS (1961-62) with that of the Eighteenth Round (1963-64) and the Nineteenth Round (1964-65). The comparative data is given in the following table :—

Per-capita expenditure classes.	17th Round 1961-62				18th Round 1963-64				19th Round 1964-65			
	Cereals, Pulses & other food items.	Milk & Milk Products.	All food items.	All non-food items.	Cereals, Pulses & other food items.	Milk & Milk Products.	All food items.	All non-food items.	Cereals Pulses & other food items.	Milk and Milk Products.	All food items.	All non-food items.
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Rs.												
0-08					Information not available							
8-11	66.40	16.80	83.20	16.80	71.00	10.60	81.60	18.40	71.20	10.20	81.40	18.60
11-13	67.00	16.20	83.20	16.80	66.60	15.80	82.40	17.60	74.20	10.40	84.60	15.40
13-15	64.40	13.20	77.60	22.40	61.60	18.00	79.60	20.40	68.00	11.40	79.40	20.60
15-18	53.00	23.40	76.40	23.60	56.00	20.80	76.80	23.20	68.80	13.20	82.00	18.00
18-21	54.00	23.40	77.40	22.60	55.40	22.00	77.40	22.60	66.40	16.60	83.	17.00
21-24	47.80	29.40	77.20	22.80	50.20	24.00	74.20	25.80	59.60	15.60	75.20	24.80
24-28	50.60	20.60	71.20	28.80	47.60	25.80	73.40	26.60	58.80	18.40	77.20	22.80
28-34	42.80	22.60	65.40	34.60	45.60	24.60	70.20	29.80	51.20	25.40	76.60	23.40
34-43	37.80	27.80	65.60	34.40	41.40	24.00	65.40	34.60	48.40	26.00	74.40	25.60
43-55	30.80	30.40	61.20	38.80	39.40	21.60	61.00	39.00	44.80	23.00	67.80	32.20
55-75	39.20	20.00	59.20	40.80	38.40	23.80	62.20	37.80	40.80	23.40	64.20	35.80
75 & above	35.40	14.60	50.00	50.00	24.00	13.20	37.20	62.80	32.00	17.60	49.60	50.40
All level pooled	47.60	22.80	70.40	29.60	46.00	21.80	67.80	32.20	51.20	21.60	72.60	27.20

It is a known fact that as the income increases, the percentage of expenditure on food items to the total expenditure decreases since the richer people spend more

on non-food articles. It is also known that in lower income brackets, the dietary composition consists more of cereals and pulses and less of protective foods like

milk and milk products.

But a close study of the figures given in the above Table shows that in 1964-65 the percentage of expenditure on cereals, pulses and

other food items increased' as compared with 1961-62 in the case of the lower and middle expenditure groups whereas the percentage of expenditure on the aforesaid food items in the case of the higher expenditure groups declined. As regards expenditure on protective food like milk and milk products, the percentage of expenditure in the case of the lower and middle expenditure groups decreased and in the case of higher expenditure groups increased. It has also been revealed that except the lowest per-capita expenditure class (Rs. 8-11) all the lower and middle income groups were spending more on food items and less on non-food items during 1964-65 as compared to 1961-62. There is a slight amelioration of conditions in relation to Rs. 8-11 per-capita expenditure class. Similarly the highest per-capita expenditure class (Rs. 75 and above) was also spending less on food items in 1964-65 as compared to 1961-62.

It is thus evident that the lower and middle expenditure groups have not been able to maintain even their old standard of living. But it is to be remembered here that during all these years, the per-capita income in the State maintained a steady upward trend. Per-capita income at current prices was Rs. 401 in 1961-62, Rs. 416 in 1962-63, Rs. 483 in 1963-64 and Rs. 619 (Reorganised Punjab) in 1964-65.

Mahalanobis Committee on Distribution of Incomes and Levels of living also reached the conclusion that the economic condition of the middle income groups has become relatively worse off. Recently on September 14, 1968, addressing the villagers in the drought-stricken Kanti village, near Allahabad, Smt. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, observed that the progress in the elimination of disparity had not been satisfactory. She also regretted that the recent boom in agriculture had further widened the disparity between the big and small cultivators.

Economic and Statistical Organization, Punjab, conducted the working-class family-living surveys during the 1965-66 at the

towns of Abohar, Dhariwal, Ludhiana, Nangal, Patiala and Phagwara and the middle-class family-living surveys for the same period at the towns of Amritsar, Ludhiana and Patiala, with a view to prepare the weighting diagrams for the construction of consumers price index numbers and study the level of living of both the classes. The budgets of 240 working-class families each at Abohar and Dhariwal and 480 each at Nangal and Phagwara, 460 and 720 at Patiala and Ludhiana respectively were studied. Similarly, the family budgets of 720, 540 and 360 middle-class families were studied at Amritsar, Ludhiana and Patiala respectively.

A digression in relation to these surveys would be quite pertinent to the subject. It has been revealed that the largest number of sampled working-class families fall in the income group Rs. 150-201 at Dhariwal, Ludhiana, Nangal and Patiala. At Abohar and Phagwara such income groups fall within the income bracket 'less than Rs. 90 and Rs. 90-120' respectively. Average monthly expenditure on current living is Rs. 124.05 at Abohar, Rs. 203.42 at Dhariwal, Rs. 198.84 at Ludhiana, Rs. 201.45 at Nangal, Rs. 172.21 at Patiala and Rs. 171.58 at Phagwara. The average budget of a working-class family was found to be

deficit at all the centres. The families reporting debt to the total families at a centre was lowest (13 per cent) at Abohar and Patiala and the highest (about 70 per cent) at Dhariwal. Average amount of loan per indebted family was Rs. 139.37 at Abohar and Rs. 501.31 at Phagwara. All the families at Abohar, Nangal and Phagwara had taken loans for 'unproductive purposes' with a view to meet the current deficit or to celebrate marriage etc. This lays bare the economic plight of the working class.

As regards the middle class, it has been found that the model family income group is Rs. 200-300, and that the model per-capita income group is Rs. 40-60. Average budget has been found to be surplus at Amritsar and Patiala and deficit at Ludhiana though the surplus in case of Amritsar is very small. Out of the total sample families 12 per cent, 21 per cent and 34 per cent reported debt at Amritsar, Ludhiana and Patiala respectively. All this shows that even the position of the middle class is not very happy.

Steady economic growth in a backward economy like ours is not possible without tightening of the belts. But every class must make equitable sacrifices so that the caravan of economic progress can move forward without causing social tensions.

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Race to the Moon

DILIP BOSE

THERE can be no doubt now that man is going to reach the moon in person before this decade is over. May be even this year. But is it a race to the moon between the USSR and the USA, albeit a friendly competition like the World Olympics? It appears to be so. But it is also perhaps the case that the Soviets and the Americans are working on *alternate* and somewhat *parallel* plans for man's first voyage to the moon.

We shall, therefore, discuss the general problem of a lunar voyage, before we dwell on the specific features of the two alternate plans!

Moon is a flying object circling the earth at an average velocity of 3,600 miles-per-hour (MPH). Earth is also a flying object orbiting the Sun at an average velocity of 66,000 MPH. To hit the moon from the earth is, therefore, like shooting a flying bird from a fast-moving car. This has been solved completely to our satisfaction.

A. soft-landing on the lunar surface has also been made, not once but many times both by the Soviet Union and the USA. This is no easy achievement for two reasons: first, one has to escape from the earth's gravitational clutches and then while falling towards the moon's surface with increasing speed, unless the velocity of descent is checked, one would crash on the lunar surface with a velocity of 5,200 MPH. Second, at the moment of touch-down on the lunar surface enough solid surface has to be found to make possible a soft and safe landing.

Both have been achieved.

First the path of journey from the earth to the moon can very aptly be compared to that of climbing a steep (really vertical) mountain, 2,16,000 miles high, then go over the summit to fall down on the other side (again vertically down) but only a distance of 24,000 miles to reach the lunar surface. This is because the earth's mass being approximately 81 times heavier than the moon, within the distance of 2,40,000 miles (all approximate figures given here) that separate the earth from the moon, the earth's gravitational pull will dominate nine-tenths of it (that is, 2,16,000 earthwards), the remaining one-tenth being dominated by the moon's gravitational attraction (according to the inverse square law).

We take off the earth with a minimum velocity of 25,000 MPH which enables us to go over the summit point, as it were, at a height or properly speaking at a distance of 2,16,000 miles away from the earth.

Then as we go on descending towards the lunar surface with increasing speed, the lunar space ship is turned upside down, that is a full 180 degrees, by means of gyroscopes and side gas-jets so that the space ship is now falling towards the moon with its tail pointed towards the moon. Its rocket motors start firing at a predetermined calculated height from the lunar surface so that an opposite thrust to that of its downward velocity to the lunar surface is imparted. This helps to check its velocity of free fall with increasing speed towards the lunar surface. If everything goes well, not only the calculations beforehand but the operation of

the rocket motors particularly the thrust given upwards *away* from the lunar surface, its velocity of descent is almost brought down to zero.

At the moment of touch-down on the lunar surface already a four-legged structure with strong springs has been opened which will cushion the shock of impact of its final touch-down on the lunar surface.

A soft-landing on the lunar surface has been effected many times by the Soviet and the American automatic space ships or stations to the moon and both television photo as well as chemical survey of the lunar soil have been done.

Second, the information obtained so far from actual telephotos and chemical analysis of the lunar soil prove beyond doubt that there is enough *hard ground* on the moon, where our future manned lunar space ships can land. This is particularly good news because there was a good deal of justified apprehension on this question. The moon, as we know, has no atmosphere, in fact completely vacuous. It was conjectured, therefore, that the meteors and meteorites striking the lunar soil without any resistance from the atmospheric friction (as is the case here on earth which helps to burn up these meteors and meteorites, only occasionally very big ones like the Siberian one 1908 hitting the earth) will break into fragments, and since there is no air to take it away, the meteor fragments must have accumulated over aeons of geological (or shall we say, seelonological) times. Hence it was thought that our lunar space ships landing on the

moon will disappear under the huge mountain-high debris of this quick-sand type of meteorite fragments.

This danger then does not exist. Indeed the lunar surface in many respects resemble that of our earth, which goes to confirm that the earth and the moon were born *contemporaneously* in time in hoary cosmic past. This also means that *the earth-moon system is basically not a planetsatellite, but a twin-planet system.*

This is indeed a very important deduction and makes it imperative to study the moon in great detail, reasons for which we will discuss at the end of this article.

Refuelling in Orbit

To reach the moon one-way, we, therefore, require a minimum velocity in total of 25,000 plus 5,250 MPH, 25,000 MPH will take us from the earth to the neutral 'summit' point, and then 5,250 MPH is required to retard our velocity of descent to the lunar surface. The return journey is almost twice this; not exactly, because to retard our velocity of descent from the neutral 'summit' point to earth, we can utilise the earth's atmospheric frictional resistance for breaking purposes. Even then it is obvious that the total velocity requirement (though not at any one time) adds up to a formidable figure of something like allowing for some reserves. 70,000 MPH, *and we got to carry enough fuel to produce this* in our rocket motors when we leave the earth.

Now obviously, this is not possible. The optimum mass ratio of a rocket is something like: 80 per cent to 15 per cent to 5 per cent where 80 per cent of the weight of the rocket is taken up by the fuel to be held in a container which is 15 per cent of the weight of the rocket, and by spending this 95 per cent we can get a payload of only 5 per cent. Now a second rocket with the same weight break-up is added as the payload of the first, and a third as the payload of the second. Then the final payload, which is our lunar space ship or

the present-day sputniks works up to 5 per cent of 5 per cent of 5 per cent or 1 : 8,000. The efficiency of the rocket increases in near-vacuum conditions of outer space so that the ratio works up to 1 : 800. This can be improved further with greater thrusts of the rocket motors, that is with better fuel and, of course, our knowledge on fuels is bound to be limited and scanty in view of its military importance as well.

But it should be obvious that to carry enough fuel to be able to produce in total a velocity of almost 70,000 MPH would require such a huge rocket as to be technically unfeasible. What should we do under such circumstances?

We face almost a similar problem when we undertake a motor journey from Calcutta to Delhi. Our car cannot carry enough petrol (or-fuel) for the journey, so we got to get petrol on the way-side station. Same here. A refuelling arrangement has to be made somewhere in space between the earth and the moon.

Eventually man will build not one, but many space stations in various orbits round the earth, one of which will only be a refuelling station, a kind of cosmic 'petrol' station. The other space stations will be used for weather and other observations. Of course, military observations also cannot be ruled out but since all the space Powers would be in a position to do it, we will hope that it will not be done. The legal implications of a space station—how far it affects the national sovereign territorial jurisdiction of a particular country—is not here within our purview. It can only be mentioned in passing that the Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko took the initiative in the September, 1966 session of the UN General Assembly to formulate some international laws and conventions in this direction and this was endorsed by the USA and other States, including India at that time.

It is also obvious that an orbiting space station with wonderful facilities for weather observations and the like will

be able to give enough advance indications and warnings of a coming flood, cyclone, etc. as to be able to reduce damages from them to zero.

But while space stations are our immediate programme for the very near future, we can even now get the extra fuel necessary to reach the moon and back by *refuelling in orbit*. And the first experiments for this seems to have been done a few days by the coupling in space of the Soviet space ship Soyuz-III with Col. Geogry Beregovi on-board, with Soyuz-II which was unmanned. In future the unmanned space ship (Soyuz II here) will be, what might be called, a tanker rocket, that is, a rocket whose entire payload will be taken up by fuel. When they rendezvous in space, the fuel from the tanker orbit is transferred to the manned space ship by a pipe line. Of course, no liquid will flow from a higher to a lower altitude there (in conditions of weightlessness there is no high or low ground), we will have to take recourse to strong pumps to transfer the fuel.

Refuelling in orbit appears to be the key to the future lunar voyage before a regular station in space with docking and refuelling facilities are permanently established.

Soviets Leading

To conquer Space is the biggest adventure of man in his chequered career on earth. It is a leap to a new dimension, the true third dimension but ultimately to the fourth of Time. Earth-bound man, even when he knows that his earth is a sphere does not take that into his daily calculation, but is accustomed to look upon it as a flat earth. That is why, we are used to say aeroplane flies at an altitude of 30,000 feet or 6 miles *above* the sea-level. Only in case of rockets when we have gone really a good distance, say a minimum of 100 miles *away from the Earth* (no longer above) that we start looking upon and considering the globe of the Earth as one entity. This is the true perspective of the third dimension.

sion. Similarly, with very high speed, a rocket soaring above or away from the earth at a velocity of 5 miles per second, we can calculate the time-dilatation effect of Einstein's fourth dimension (even though 5 miles per second is far below the speed of light). It must be noted that Einstein's famous equation on the time-dilatation effect could now be checked experimentally with the help of the tremendous speed of the artificial satellites round the earth.

A leap into space is also a new and fuller outlook of man's life on earth. Earth-bound man, enclosed by the atmosphere (our *akash*) is like the man within the four walls of his room. It is only when he goes into Space into his *Mahakash*, that he can get a proper perspective of his own little world in the context of the Space beyond. Earth-bound man has so long been like the proverbial *kupamanduka* of our ancient folk-lore, to leap into Space is his liberation.

And fifty-one years ago, as the Russian Revolution ushered in a new era in man's history, the era of a sense of new values based on social equity and justice, of freedom and peace, the era of Socialism, and changed man's course of history on Earth, so forty years later of that revolution on October 4, 1957, it is the socialist Soviet Union that first sent the artificial satellites in orbit round the earth. Since then the Soviets have scored many a first in this mightiest of man's adventure; in September and October, 1959 by Lunik II and III it could successfully hit the moon and take photograph of the hitherto hidden other side of the moon. On April 12, 1961 it was a Soviet citizen and member of its Communist Party, Yuri Gagarin that first blazed a trail of glory to outer space, the first man to see the globe of the earth in its entirety. Again Space had to yield its secrets to the charms of a Soviet woman only, Valentina Tereshkova. Valentina Tereshkova, (code name 'Chaika' or sea-gull), as restless as that bird which delights in braving storms, did a dual flight with Bykovsky.

This was the second dual flight, the first one was also by two Soviet men.

We are not underestimating the American achievements in Space. In sophistication and miniaturisation of their instruments they are ahead of the Soviets. In walks (strictly floating) in Space, when spacemen come out of their spaceships, they are probably a little more ahead in their achievements in so far as they have also demonstrated the successful use of gas jets in a space-man's manovering outside his spaceship. In observations of the planet Venus, it was American Mariner II which first gave us the preliminary observations which establish that Venus may be too hot to sustain life. In effecting a soft-landing on the moon and sending us not only telephotos of the lunar soil but also its chemical analysis, their achievements are certainly very high.

Man's Signal Victory

And now comes the forty-dollar question—who will land first on the moon, a Soviet or an American citizen? Let us make one point very firmly at the outset. Whoever it is, it will be first and foremost *man's signal victory*. To go out to Space, "to seek a newer world, to sail beyond the sunset and the baths of all the Western stars" is also to leap to a new dimension of man's existence on earth, a new reality that man as a whole of all countries and nations, belongs to his mother Earth. After all it is only from Space that he can see not his own little or big country, but the whole globe of the earth, his own and his true habitat. It is not for nothing that many of the spacemen (cosmonauts or astronauts if you like) exclaimed that they wanted to hold and encompass the whole earth in their embrace.

We have already said that the Soviets and the Americans seem to be working on alternate but complimentary plans to reach the moon. Let us discuss only the general blueprints available so far.

We have already noted that a voyage to the moon and back

with soft-landing on the lunar soil requires in total an enormous sum of velocity. This can only be acquired by refuelling either in orbit or from future space stations. It appears that while the Soviets are planning to do the refuelling in a parking orbit round the earth, the Americans want to do the same in a similar parking orbit round the moon. We have already discussed the refuelling technique.

What the Americans want to do, it appears, is to send a space ship in orbit round the moon. Such a space ship, after crossing the neutral summit point at a distance of 2,16,000 miles from the earth, will settle as a satellite of the moon itself. Then at a pre-arranged point, a baby space ship with no wings or streamlining (since from this orbit to the moon there is no atmosphere) will separate from the main body of the space ship, descend to the lunar soil with the spacemen (one of them at least will be left behind in the parent ship), and do the return journey again to the parent ship after fulfilling their mission on the moon.

The Soviets, on the contrary, may first try a circumnavigation of the moon—as has already successfully done by Zond-5—this time by a spaceship with men aboard, before actual landing. Jules Verne's story has come to life. Even in circumnavigation of the moon, with men on board, the space ship should have reserve fuel which can now be done with the coupling technique of Soyuz-3 and unmanned Soyuz-2, which as we have noted, can very well be a tanker rocket. The actual landing site on the moon has also been decided—it will be either Mare Imbrium or Mare Norris or certainly one of the big Mares (meaning seas, but there is no sea on the moon, no water even, it is only a big valley between some of the highest mountain peaks on the moon).

Why to Moon?

Why should we want to reach the moon when so many urgent problems await our immediate attention and solution? Also a

(Continued on Page 38)

This week the discussion on Czechoslovakia includes an interview with Luigi Longo, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Italy, and a study of the Action Programme of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia by Dr. Jagdish Das Gupta.

Luigi Longo Interview

In this interview, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Italy replies to questions from the Journal, L'Astrolabio, on the events in Czechoslovakia. This interview is reprinted here from the British Marxist Weekly, Comment, dated October 5, 1968.

L'Astrolabio : *In May, with Kosygin's visit to Karlovy Vary, a tacit truce was declared in the conflict between the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union, Poland, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary and Bulgaria, on the one hand, and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, on the other, concerning the new course initiated in Czechoslovakia. The formal agreements of Cierna and Bratislava followed. Then, without warning, the military intervention. Why? What do you think of the arguments used to justify this intervention?*

Longo : I do not believe, as I have already said many times in recent months, that the Czechoslovak Communist Party, with its new course, was in any danger of falling into the hands of reformists or that socialist Czechoslovakia could have been overwhelmed by counter-revolution, if such an attempt had been made.

In my opinion, socialism in Czechoslovakia, after 23 years of existence and achievements, despite weaknesses and errors, had put down such solid roots in all Czechoslovak economic, social and political life that it was securely in a position to deal with any attempts made by right-wing forces at home and imperialist and counter-revolutionary forces abroad.

Moreover, the new course adopted by the Czechoslovak Communist Party was aimed precisely at consolidating socialism in Czechoslovakia, over-coming the errors and delays of the past, activating democratic life in the Party and the country, and adapting relations between the Party and the state, and between both of these and the working class, the popular masses and public opinion, to the new needs of the country.

For that matter, the decisions of the Central Committee in January and April, which initiated the new course, were also favourably received by the responsible leadership bodies of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). It is true that the new leadership of the Czechoslovak Party was later accused of not reacting sufficiently to social democratic and counter-revolutionary attacks against the Communist Party itself, the socialist foundations and international collocation of the country.

It is also true that in that period the Czechoslovak Communist Party proved to be deeply divided and almost paralysed in its external action by divergencies in the past and contrasts over internal problems of organisation and leadership. But it later found a greater unity on these pro-

blems and around its new leaders and Dubcek, especially after the Cierna and Bratislava meetings. It therefore had ample possibilities to defeat the anti-socialist and right-wing forces.

It is my opinion that since those meetings no facts have emerged to justify fears that the danger of a counter-revolutionary *coup d'etat* and a collapse of socialist power were imminent and inevitable. I therefore do not feel that the catastrophic hypothesis underlying the military intervention was well grounded and even less that the situation in Czechoslovakia was such as to constitute that "painful necessity" with which intervention in Hungary was justified in 1956.

For this reason, we expressed our dissent and reprobation as soon as we learned of the military intervention in Czechoslovakia by the five socialist countries which in July had sent the so-called Warsaw letter. And we expressed them not only for the factual reasons above, but also for more general reasons of principle.

In fact, we consider the autonomy, independence and national sovereignty of every state, the autonomy and sovereignty of every Communist Party as undeniable questions of principle. We agree that the fate and future of socialism in one country interests not only the Communists, demo-

crats and people of that country, but also the Communists, democrats and peoples of all countries; however, this principle cannot, in our opinion, in any way be understood as a right to military intervention in the internal affairs of another Communist Party and another country.

This principle was, for that matter solemnly proclaimed by the government of the Soviet Union itself in a resolution of October 1956—after the Hungarian events—in which it was clearly affirmed that “the countries of the great community of socialist nations can only build their relations on positions of absolute equality, respect for territorial integrity, state independence and sovereignty, and non-interference in each other’s affairs”. The resolution recalled that “the 20th Congress of the CPSU resolutely condemned violations and errors, and called for a consistent application, on the part of the Soviet Union, of the Leninist principles of equality among peoples in its relations with the other socialist countries”.

The same resolution set out very clearly what was meant by the “consistent application” of Leninist principles of equality among peoples: “the stationing of troops of this or that member-state of the Warsaw Pact on the territory of another member-state of the Warsaw Pact takes place through agreement among all the member-states and only with the consent of that state on whose territory, by its request, these military formations have been, or are to be, stationed”.

L’Astrolabio : *In the concrete, how do you judge the military intervention itself and how do you think the Soviet leaders came to do such a thing, thus going against principles and positions they have so often proclaimed ?*

Longo : I consider the military intervention in Czechoslovakia a tragic error, in the light of the decisions of the 20th Congress of the CPSU as well.

These decisions were aimed at correcting the errors committed

during the Stalinist period, and at overcoming the political and doctrinaire narrowness that—after its heroic efforts for the building of socialism and its victory in the struggle against Nazism and Fascism for the freedom and independence of the peoples, were preventing the full unfolding of the prestige and influence of socialism and the Soviet Union in the world.

The results of the new course initiated by the 20th Congress have been of great importance both within the Soviet Union and on the international level, despite the limitations and uncertainties with which the new course have been applied and the contrasts it has provoked.

These decisions were the expression of a deep faith in the anti-capitalist class consciousness of the workers and in the realisation of socialist ideas by the broadest possible popular masses; they were open to the new possibilities maturing in the world to attract new countries and new peoples to anti-capitalist struggle for liberation. There can be no doubt that these decisions have greatly aided the development of the working class and Communist movement in the world and the struggles of national liberation which have brought the vast majority of colonial peoples to national independence and, some to march towards socialism.

It is true that the problems of the 20th Congress are still little or in no way solved in many socialist countries, complicated and made more difficult by forces which express resistance and opposition to the basic ideas of socialism. Particularly in the new socialist countries, these pressures come not only from what remains of the old social groups, but also from new strata, formed in the process of development of socialist society and as a consequence of it and by the persistence to a greater or lesser extent, of paternalistic and bureaucratic forms in the various fields of political, economic, social and cultural activity. A contradiction of this nature lies at the bottom of events in Czechoslovakia and it is this contradiction that the initiators of the new

course were attempting to overcome.

In fact, the new course was the product of the long period of stagnation of Czechoslovak society, of the twelve years delay in carrying out the change of course urged by the 20th Congress. The result was an imbalance, a contrast between the political structures and civil society, so that a certain political leadership had become a hindrance to the full development of all the creative capacities of socialism.

The responsibility of the old leaders of the Czechoslovak Communist Party lies in having let this situation develop. The error of our Soviet comrades lies in not having had confidence in the new Czechoslovak leaders to carry out the new course—to bring the Party, the state and the country back to a correct democratic life—without compromising the future of socialism and the authority of the Party.

It was said in our Central Committee that the military intervention was produced by a conception which sees in the appearance of mistaken, discontented or hostile opinions an immediate danger for the socialist regime and, in a new flexibility of social and political life, an undermining of the leadership function of the Communist Party, and which sub-ordinates the very principles of national independence and Party autonomy to a military judgement of the necessity to defend the frontiers of the socialist countries.

But, it is said, there were speculations and threats by the Right and imperialism. Certainly there were and there still are. No one denies that the forces of reaction and imperialism carry on a destructive action against the socialist societies in every field, in every situation and in every way, particularly and increasingly through ideological pressure.

They did so in the conditions produced by the beginning of the new course and they are doing so now. The question is how to fight this destructive action most effectively, in whatever form it may take, and to rally the vast majority of the popular masses around the Communist Party in

this struggle, overcoming the errors and weaknesses of the past and restoring to socialism all its social, human and democratic drive. I do not believe that the best way to answer capitalist and imperialist ideological pressure is to weaken our political and ideological weapons, trusting primarily to authoritarian and administrative pressure.

L'Astrolabio : *With your stand on events in Czechoslovakia and particularly with your expression of "dissent" and "reprobation" over the military intervention, you have taken a position in open contrast with the judgement and, above all, with the action of the Kremlin in Czechoslovakia. What are the elements underlying this choice ?*

Longo : Our dissent and reprobation are not based on moralistic or democratistic motives, but rather on political reasons and reasons of principle.

By this, I do not mean to refer to our conception of the Italian road to socialism. We have never attempted and we are not attempting now to hold up our socialist perspective as a model valid for the Soviet Union, the socialist countries or any other Party or country. I am well aware that the past, evolution and the present situation, condition the development of every society, and, with all the more reason, they condition the development of the existing socialist societies, particularly of their economic regimes and their social and political structures.

But I also think that the socialist countries, precisely because of the level of development they have reached, the problems raised by this development, technology and the modern sciences, and the weight that the national aspect of each country has come to have in the process of the building of socialism, cannot escape the necessity of dealing with the problems of an appropriate and profound democratisation of their respective economic, political, social and cultural orders, in the ways most suited to

their particular conditions and in full autonomy.

But limiting ourselves to the case of Czechoslovakia, which interests us here, I can say that our stands have been taken on the basis of the position of our Party in the international working class and Communist movement and with reference to the present world situation in which the existence of the socialist countries, the liberation and tormented advance of the colonial peoples, the continuing power and contemporary crisis of capitalism and imperialism, all flow together.

For this reason, I believe that the interests of socialism must also be considered beyond the borders of the existing socialist states. In fact, our conception of the development of the working class and Communist movement pivots on respect for the autonomy of every Communist Party and on the independence of every state and, at the same time, on the need for a consistent development of socialist democracy.

The recognition, respect for and practice of these principles in the socialist countries and in relations between socialist countries is indispensable in consolidating and extending the prestige and influence of the Soviet Union, in increasing the power of attraction of socialist ideals and in favouring the advance towards socialism—in an atmosphere of peaceful coexistence—of new countries and new peoples.

We were influenced, therefore, in taking our stands on the events in Czechoslovakia, by our concern for the interests and prospects of the international working class and Communist movement, because in the peaceful competition between the two systems, nothing must obscure all the political and ideal superiority of socialism, all its democratic potentiality and the concept of relations between socialist countries based on equality and complete independence among nations.

For this reason, I feel that any restrictive conception of the problems and organisation of political and civil life, of the

confrontation of opinions, just as any tendency to interfere in the internal affairs of another Party or another country, do not help the spread of the socialist idea in the world, or the cause of unity and solidarity among Communist and working class Parties or their influence on other popular and democratic forces.

L'Astrolabio : *As the days go by, however, one gets the impression that the intervention in Czechoslovakia was determined not only by a mistaken evaluation of developments of the new course in that country, but also, to a large extent, by a precise, strategic decision on how to deal with the centrifugal forces today at work within the Warsaw Pact and the socialist countries in general, just as similar forces are at work within the Atlantic alliance.*

A whole series of articles published by organs of the USSR and the four countries which intervened in Czechoslovakia seem to be rigidly inspired by that "bloc policy" which you stated in your report to the Central Committee also operates within the socialist camp. Do you feel all this—together with the attacks on the Romanian and Yugoslav leaders and despite the different international collocation of Romania and Yugoslavia—may indicate the danger of other interventions ?

Longo : We have followed and are following the articles you refer to with the greatest attention, because they tend, or seem to tend, towards a "theorisation" of the intervention carried out in Czechoslovakia. A recent article in *Pravda* seems to move in that direction, as does the statement by newspapers in the German Democratic Republic that the intervention in Czechoslovakia "constitutes a decision of international and strategic significance."

These statements are based on certain analyses, according to which the threat of imperialism against the socialist countries in the present phase takes the form not of military pressure, but rather of a policy of infiltr-

ration in the socialist countries—conducted through the use of slogans calling for ideological, political and cultural “liberalisation”—and of a plan aimed at creating differentiations among the various socialist countries. According to these analyses, “this is the European variation of the global strategy, which is expressed in Vietnam with the tactic of *limited war* and in the Middle East with the tactic of *war by proxy*”.

One can even agree with the general evaluation underlying these analyses, in the sense that today a danger of war does not exist in Europe and that the struggle between capitalism and socialism takes place on other grounds: political, ideological cultural and economic grounds. But it seems to us that from this analysis—if one accepts it—very different conclusions must be drawn than those which led to intervention in Czechoslovakia.

The problem for the socialist countries is to prepare themselves to wage this struggle most effectively. The assertion that imperialism is counting on a differentiation among the socialist countries and “liberalisation” must not lead to identifying everyone who stands for renewal of social society within the socialist countries and even the Communist Parties of these countries as agents—knowing or not—of imperialism.

Following this road, we move backwards, and not forwards. Following this road, we arrive inevitably at even greater rigidity in the internal life of these countries, and move farther away from the solution of those problems which are pressing—by admission of the Parties of these countries—and which demand solution. Following this road, in the final analysis, we do not consolidate any of the socialist countries or these countries taken as a whole. The ideological and ideal conflict that exists must be waged with ideas and ideological weapons, with ideas and political initiatives and offensives, not with administrative measures which, in the extreme, lead to military interventions of the sort carried out in Czecho-

slovakia. We have expressed these convictions of ours and we continue to express them in the clearest possible way, both publicly and privately.

It is also our impression that behind these theorisation of intervention in Czechoslovakia, there is an incorrect evaluation of power relationships, almost as if the European socialist countries were today a sort of fortress under siege. The actual situation is quite different. Among other things conceptions of this type lead to underestimating the contradictions existing in the Western camp, the deep tensions and the new pressures at work in these countries in various fields, including that of rebellion against the unequal relations which have grown up between the United States and the other Atlantic alliance countries.

As concerns us most directly—as Italian Communists—it is all too evident that we cannot share any conception and in Italy it is *La Malfa's* conception—according to which further progress in *detente* depends in the last analysis on a consolidation of the existing blocs. According to this idea, we are faced with a bi-polar world, and there is no alternative but to accept the existence of two leader-states. We do not recognise any leader-state or any leader-Party. The bi-polar vision of international politics is increasingly contradicted by the facts, although no one can deny the particular position of the two major powers.

In the interests of *detente* and co-existence, in our opinion, it is necessary for every country—and as concerns us most directly, Italy—to make an autonomous, original contribution both to the building of new relations on the international level and to the creation at home of more advanced political equilibriums. It is within this general context that the national roads to socialism are a reality of the present epoch. A reality at times sorely opposed, but an undeniable reality. A reality that will continue to advance, whatever difficulties it may encounter and

whatever conservative resistance it has to overcome.

L'Asrrolabio : *What is your evaluation of the compromise reached in Moscow between the Czechoslovak and Soviet delegations? Do you feel that on the basis of this compromise it will be possible to reach a settlement in Czechoslovakia, without serious fractures in the Party and the nation?*

Longo: Such an evaluation is not easy, given the way in which this compromise was arrived at, under conditions of serious upset and in the “state of necessity” constituted by the presence of foreign troops in Czechoslovakia.

For the moment, I believe we can say that this compromise averted a catastrophe and that it may constitute a first step towards the normalisation of the situation in Czechoslovakia and of relations between the socialist countries. I feel that only through the re-establishment of a normal situation—and this implies withdrawal of foreign troops—can further, dramatic aggravations of the situation, and more serious lacerations in the international working class, Communist and democratic movement, be avoided.

I hope that the conclusion reached in the Moscow meeting will permit the Czechoslovak peoples and Communist Party to move consistently forward, in spite of everything and in full autonomy in the process of democratic renewal and consolidation of their socialist society, begun with the Central Committee decisions of January and the Party programme issued in April. The problem at present is the full revival and development, on a basis of reciprocal confidence, of relations of collaboration and solidarity between the socialist countries.

The Moscow compromise was made possible by the strength and unity shown by the Communist Party and peoples of Czechoslovakia, who, in the presence of foreign troops in their country, gave proof of unprecedented pride and discipline, of faith in the ideas of democratic and humanistic socialism, and succeeded in

avoiding errors and inadvisable acts which would have had irreparable consequences.

The basic task of the Czechoslovak Party at this moment is to preserve the unprecedented confidence which the Party has won in these last days among the whole people. Only the united Party, with its own leadership, headed by Dubcek, Cernik and others, is in a position to lead Czechoslovakia out of the present situation and to guarantee the continuation of the policy undertaken after the January plenary session.

As for our Party, I think that it must contribute to the achievement of total autonomy for the government and Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, in the ways that are open to it. I think it would be mistaken on our part to attempt to superimpose any position of ours on the very firm and dignified position of the Czechoslovak Party and people. We shall continue, therefore, even under the new conditions, to develop our solidarity with the Czechoslovak Party and its action of renewal.

We must not do anything that could weaken or upset Svoboda and Dubcek's action or weaken the unity of the Czechoslovak Party and peoples around the leaders who have directed the negotiations in Moscow. On the contrary, we must do everything we can to help the Czechoslovak leadership overcome the present difficult situation, obtain guarantees of its independence, sovereignty and freedom, and remove all factors which might weaken the government, mortify the Party, leave room for provocation and undermine the appeals for calm and responsibility launched by Svoboda and Dubcek.

L'Astrolabio : *The events in Czechoslovakia have raised two large problems with dramatic urgency : that of the national roads to socialism and that of the unity of the international working class and Communist movement. What can you say about these ?*

Longo : We reject the idea, which, for that matter, has been

advanced by our adversaries and the enemies of unity of the working class and Communist movement, that events in Czechoslovakia have marked the end of the strategy of national roads to socialism and of any form of international unity and collaboration between the working class and Communist, popular, democratic and progressive forces.

As concerns us, we maintain more clearly and consistently than ever our conception of the Italian road to socialism and we feel that we have once more provided unquestionable proof of our complete autonomy, precisely in connection with events in Czechoslovakia and in relation to an extremely important and meaningful moment in the international policy and action of the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, we have always said that autonomy and national peculiarities must not lead to, and for us do not lead to, localistic narrowness and closure. We have considered ourselves, and do consider ourselves, an integral and active part of the great international working class and Communist movement, of which the socialist countries, and first among them, the Soviet Union, make up so large a part.

It is true that the Czechoslovak crisis has faced the Communist movement with fundamental problems which will have to receive a further and adequate elaboration, on the theoretical level as well. It is our job to draw the necessary conclusions from these events, but in order to continue working for new relations of understanding and collaboration among all the Communist, democratic and progressive forces. It is our job to continue through debate and confrontation, critical and theoretical study and elaboration on the problem of the renewal and expansion of socialist democracy, on the causes and nature of the serious resistance, closure and delay encountered in this field, and on the new forms of unity of the working class and Communist movement to which we must and can arrive—without in any way detracting from the diversity of experiences and variety of contributions and with all necessary respect for the auto-

nomy of each Party and the independence of each State.

L'Astrolabio : *The concepts of autonomy and unity contain inevitable elements of contradiction. How do you reconcile them ?*

Longo : For us, the two concepts mean : the first, the need for an open confrontation of the positions, to which each Party can and must autonomously arrive on the basis of the situations in which it operates and the problems it faces, positions which can never exactly coincide, given the unequal development of the world, the different characteristics of capitalism and imperialism that prevail in each case and the differences in class relations this produces ; the second, the necessity to find, above and beyond the particularities and differences of specific situations and conditions, what there is in common in the reasons and goals of the struggle, which can and must constitute a basis for understanding, collaboration and unity in the struggle, to increase the drive and strength of the various components and thus favour their general success and their advance.

When we speak of strategy and "total contestation" we must never neglect to consider the variety and multiplicity of contributions that can be made in this sense, on pain of reducing these terms to pompous, empty phrases. I would say that every contestation is all the more "total", not only the more it attacks the capitalist and imperialist system in its totality, but also the more it tries to bring to this contestation the greatest number of forces which can reinforce and broaden it.

We fight for unity in diversity in the consideration that the frontiers of socialism do not coincide with the frontiers of the socialist countries, but extend much further to include all the forces in the world who are fighting against capitalism and imperialism, under the most varied conditions and with objectives that converge only in the general prospect of socialism.

Obviously, the conditions and goals of the socialist struggle are

very different in those countries where socialism in its first stage has already triumphed and in those countries, such as the advanced capitalist countries, where the struggle amidst difficulties of every sort, is still only for the creation of the necessary conditions for transition from capitalism to socialism. In this diversity of conditions and goals, it would be illusory and absurd to try to reduce the socialist struggle to a single common denominator, to make the tactic and strategy valid for one group dependent on the tactic and strategy valid for another.

It was correctly stated at our Central Committee meeting that, in this case, our first duty as internationalists is for each to do his part on that section of frontier where he finds himself, without ever forgetting the field as a whole, the various over-all needs of the struggle and the necessity for communication and collaboration between the various fronts. This is our idea of unity in diversity.

As concerns our Party, in an advanced capitalist country, it was also stated, and correctly, that we must not expect our liberation to come either from the underdeveloped zones of the world or from the action of the socialist states. The success of the socialist struggles in both these fields can greatly aid our struggle, but the proletariat, the Communists, the democrats of the advanced capitalist countries and of our country have a function of their own to fulfil in the general struggle for peace, freedom and the advance of humanity on the road to socialism.

We shall help the other fronts in the socialist struggle—and Czechoslovakia—by contributing, among other things, to driving back the forces of imperialism and revanchism from the positions they occupy in Europe, to creating the conditions for overcoming the bloc system.

●

L'Astolabio : *Do you think meetings and discussion with the*

other Communist Parties on events in Czechoslovakia would be opportune and possible? After the conflicts which have emerged in this regard, what will become of the world conference of working class and Communist Parties which was scheduled to take place in Moscow next November?

Longo: I think it would be useful to have an exchange and confrontation of ideas with the other Communist Parties concerning events in Czechoslovakia and the political and theoretical problems which have arisen in this connection. For that matter, during the course of the events themselves, we have had continual contacts not only with the Parties of the countries most directly involved, but also with exponents and representatives of the other Communist Parties, particularly in Europe.

We are examining several different proposals made by various Communist Parties for broader meetings among Communist and working class parties, particularly in capitalist Europe. In these countries, the problems of the struggle against the speculations, intrigues and threats of the imperialist and Atlantic forces, against the policy of rearmament and the division of Europe into opposing military blocks which, with the excuse of events in Czechoslovakia, has gathered new force, demand not only an exchange of information and experiences, but also a clarification of our positions and a co-ordination of initiatives and action, aimed at bring together all the working class, democratic and progressive forces who are determined to resist threats of dangerous steps backward along the road of *detente*, disarmament, nuclear control and peaceful co-existence.

It is my opinion that, while respecting the autonomy and independence of every Party, we must find ways and forms of giving the working class and Communist movement of capitalist Europe points of contact and common goals in their struggle, so as to reinforce our resistance to the

dangers of reactionary involution and the consequent threat of war.

As I have already said to our Central Committee, I believe that in general an essential condition for the positive political outcome of any type of meeting, at any level, is to avoid the contraposition, open or not, of one group of Parties to others. Such meetings must permit a frank confrontation of opinions and an open examination of the facts and experiences, with the aim of effectively seeking positive solutions for the re-establishment of the most trusting collaboration among all the Communist and working class Parties.

I feel it is a good sign, at least as far as concerns the Communist and working class Parties in capitalist Europe that, in the dramatic situation created by events in Czechoslovakia, they gave signs of initiative and vitality. I refer to the common or convergent action, before and after the military intervention, by the Communist Party of Italy and the Communist Party of France and to the position taken by the Spanish, Finnish, British, Austrian, Belgian, Swiss and other Parties.

This convergence and unity of positions and the autonomous initiatives of the Communist Parties of capitalist Europe show that autonomy corresponds to a capacity for initiative that expresses itself in a strongly internationalist sense. I believe that precisely in the conditions created by events in Czechoslovakia, it is the duty of every Communist Party not to shut itself up, not to favour the formation of blocks of opposing parties, but to fight against new fractures by opposing anathemas and illegitimate interferences.

As concerns the world conference of working class and Communist Parties, I can say that preparations are already quite advanced, but I feel that until the situation created by events in Czechoslovakia has reached a definitive and satisfactory normalisation, it will be neither opportune nor useful, nor perhaps even possible to carry them to conclusion.

Spotlight on Action Programme

JAGADISH DASGUPTA

ALTHOUGH the immediate crisis in Czechoslovakia has passed off with Moscow Agreement and the subsequent Prague treaty on the withdrawal of the Warsaw pact troops, difference of opinion on problems of socialism and democracy, nationalism and proletarian internationalism, role of the Communist Party in advanced Socialist countries and similar such questions, so sharply focussed in course of recent events in Czechoslovakia have yet to be finally resolved. In this context, it will be instructive to study the Action Programme of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia for a proper understanding of the outlook of the new leadership of the party.

The Action Programme opens with a brief review of the "two great currents—the national liberation movement and socialism." The historical account of the foundation of the Republic of Czechoslovakia, while correctly emphasising the role of national liberation struggles of the Czechs and Slovaks, does not point out the fact that the bourgeois power that was installed, headed by Jan Masaryk and Benes was closely allied with Western imperialism. It should not be forgotten that the Czechoslovak State was formed as part of the Little Entente built up by French imperialism to organise offensive against the Soviet Union.

In more recent period, its leaders Benes and Jan Masaryk preferred handing over the country to the Nazis in 1938 at Munich rather than protecting its sovereignty with the help offered by the Soviet Union. These facts are essential for an understanding of the role of the Czech bourgeoisie

and for a correct perspective of history.

All that the Action Programme has to say about the bourgeois order are such profundities as "it did not solve the onerous class antagonism and was not able to lay reliable foundation for lasting prosperity" did not "guarantee the workers and employees full employment and secure existence" and that it "did not succeed in eliminating the influence of extreme nationalism". The Programme's complete silence about the reactionary character of the bourgeois leadership of the Republic of Czechoslovakia appears significant particularly in the background of the rising clamour by a section of Czechoslovak intellectuals today for boosting Jan Masaryk and Benes and of the slanderous attacks against the Soviet Union by the propagation of the cock-and-bull story about Jan Masaryk's murder by Soviet agents.

While the Action Programme waxes eloquently about the "policy of Czechoslovakia's road to socialism as pursued from 1945 to 1948" as "an expression of the endeavours to respect the complexity of specific internal and international conditions of Czechoslovakia", it fails even to mention the fact that the Czechoslovak bourgeoisie and a section of the Social democratic leadership of the then Government staged a counter-revolutionary coup in 1948 which was defeated by the heroic resistance of the working class. It is obvious that in spite of "many elements" the understanding of which could contribute towards achieving...present aim of democratizing the socialist order" the policy pursued must

also have contained elements which enabled the reactionaries to organise the counter-revolution.

It cannot be denied that such presentation of the history of Czechoslovakia helped reactionary forces to build up mass anti-Soviet and anti-Communist hysteria by glorifying the past and denouncing everything that the communists did during the last twenty years. The least that one should expect from the authors of a document of such importance is an objective analysis of history. Instead, such wrong approach continues throughout the Programme.

In their just struggle against the authoritarian, bureaucratic leadership of the Novotny period, the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak C.P. has swung to the other extreme of completely repudiating the leading role of the Party. The Programme declares the thesis "that 'the Party is the instrument of the dictatorship of the Proletariat' is false". The concept of the "state of the whole people" formulated at the Twenty-second Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and acclaimed in the international Communist movement, does not repudiate Lenin's formulation. It has emphasised the inter-relation between the Party, the working class and the people, and their mutual interdependence. The increasingly conscious participation and leadership of the people in the creative development of Marxism and in the enrichment of the socialist society has imposed greater and more diversified responsibilities on the vanguard, which must be capable of harnessing these energies giving them a sense of purpose and stimulating them by demo-

cratising and decentralising responsibilities and at the same time maintaining necessary vigilance to protect the society from both physical and ideological attack of the 'discredited political forces' and from the machinations of imperialism. The Action Programme has relegated the Party to the status of a moral preacher: "Its mission lies primarily in arousing socialist initiative, in showing the ways and actual possibilities of communist perspective" etc.

It must be emphasised that even in the advanced Socialist State the basis of power resides in the working class; therefore the detachment of the vanguard of the proletariat from the leading role will create anarchy. This has been proved during the recent events in Czechoslovakia where the Party's failure to intervene and assert its leading role laid to the strengthening of the anti-socialist and anti-communist forces and their consolidation. Both the Right and the Left deviations are equally dangerous. So in combating one a swing to the other end must be guarded against.

Class structure and Class Struggles

With the advance of Socialism the nature of classes in society gradually changes and consequently the old antagonism of classes and class conflicts are replaced by co-operation between new types of classes. The old dictum about the intensification of class struggle with the advance of socialism has long been repudiated. But it is utopian to believe that the overthrown classes, as a result of the Socialist revolution, can never strike back when there exists the danger of instigation from international imperialism. Lenin in his work. *Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky* has dealt on this problem in great detail:

"For a long time after the revolution the exploiters inevitably continue to enjoy a number of great practical advantages" ... "If the exploiters are defeated in one country ... they still remain stronger than the exploited, for the international connections of

the exploiters are enormous" ... "This historical truth is that in every profound revolution, a prolonged, stubborn and desperate resistance of the exploiters, who for a number of years enjoy important practical advantages over the exploited, is the rule". "The transition from Capitalism to Communism represents an entire historical epoch. Until this epoch has terminated, the exploiters will inevitably cherish the hope of restoration..."

The Action Programme grossly underestimates this danger from the dispossessed classes. It platonically declares: "All social classes, strata, groups ... agree with the fundamental interest and aims of socialism."

Recent developments in Czechoslovakia have amply demonstrated that overthrown bourgeoisie did indeed intensify the class struggle under the facade of 'democracy' and 'humanism' while in reality they directed their main attack against the Communist Party, against the Socialist state for the revival of the bourgeois order. This lack of understanding of the Leninist principles emasculated the Party and deprived it of its strength to fight against the bourgeois offensive.

The June Plenary meeting of the Central Committee of Czechoslovak CP pointed out:

"We cannot conceal that some discredited political forces of the past which think their opportunities have again come, are trying to use the democratisation and to return to political scene ... Such tendencies conceal a danger that would not only threaten the process embarked upon in January, but would involve the risk of very serious consequences for the development of the country".

Even this warning did not make them realise the extent of the danger because such a reality is not justified by the hypothesis of the Action Programme. This outlook of the Action Programme naturally encouraged the reactionary forces and emboldened them to come out with open calls for the liquidation of the Party. The much-publicised 'Two Thousand Words' manifesto openly gave a call for strikes, disorder

and protecting 'with weapons if need be' a government which will carry out its mandate. In the opening sentence the manifesto declares "The first threat, to our national life was the war". It is not without significance that the signatories does not consider the notorious Munich Pact and the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Hitler which took place before the war, as a threat to the national life. The Action Programme's significant omission about Munich and Hitler's occupation and the betrayal by Czechoslovak bourgeoisie during that period, has directly encouraged these reactionary forces and has jeopardised the interest of socialist advance in Czechoslovakia.

The State

The Action Programme sets out to elaborate the political form of the State that it proposes to establish, as follows:

"The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia will use every means to develop such forms of political life that will ensure the expression of the direct say and will of the working class and all working people in political decision making".

"The National Front as a whole and all its component parts must be allowed independent rights and their own responsibility for the management of our country and society".

It will be remembered that the form of state visualised conform to the 'State of the Whole People'. Nobody can criticize the Central Committee of C.P. of Czechoslovakia for holding out such a noble perspective. However, any such fundamental change in the most important organ of power, like the State, must take into account, among other things, objective assessment of the existing relations of class forces inside the country, international relations and the stage of economic development.

The Action Programme makes a curious assessment:

"Formation of political forces striving to negate this concept of the National Front to remove the National Front as a

whole from political power, *was ruled out as long ago as 1945*, after the tragic experience of both our nations with pre-war political developments of the then Czechoslovak Republic; it is naturally unacceptable for our present republic".

This is obviously unacceptable for the simple reason that it has refused to recognise the fact that there existed anti-socialist forces in Czechoslovakia after 1945, who staged the counter-revolutionary coup in 1948. If the Central Committee of C.P. of Czechoslovakia has revised its estimation of the coup in 1948 and now considers it as a democratic socialist upsurge which the working class of Czechoslovakia wrongly suppressed it should pronounce it frankly and substantiate such an approach. The international Communist movement, however, has so far had no occasions to revise its opinion about the attempted 1948 coup in Czechoslovakia. Secondly, Comrade Dubcek, himself admitted in his report at the plenary meeting of the Central Committee on May 29, 1968 :

"Anti-communist tendencies have intensified and certain elements are trying to go over to more active forms of activity. This danger constitutes the main threat to the further development of the process of democratisation ... Danger coming from remnants of the former exploiting classes and counter-revolutionary clubs "...

"The reality of their danger however lies in the fact that they are trying to create for themselves a basis in an atmosphere of anti-communism and anti-socialism, in supporting various elements and disintegrating tendencies which would threaten the structure of our society".

Evidently the assessment in the Action Programme quoted earlier does not correspond with the reality, as mentioned by Dubcek, nor does it conform to the Programmes formulation that : "All social classes, strata, groups, both nations and all nationalities of the society agree with the fundamental interests and aim of socialism."

The aim of setting up 'the

state of the whole people' may be justified as future perspective to be implemented when the necessary pre-conditions have been fulfilled, but to try to impose them immediately, is to say the least, the height of utopian folly. But the Action Programme makes the strange formulation : "But we consider it indispensable to change the present state of things right now, even before the 14th Congress, so that the development of Socialism and its inner dynamics are not hampered by the outdated factors in the political system."

Moreover, the Central Committee took for granted that the majority of delegates attending the 14th Congress, unless the entire basis of election of delegates were changed in the meanwhile, might not endorse this programme and accordingly it wanted to rush through the measures before the Congress. Such arrogation of power by the Central Committee Plenum is completely incompatible with the aim of democratisation professed by the Action Programme ; nay, it even violates the 'not so radical' organizational principle of democratic centralism which is practised by other Communist Parties.

One can appreciate the ardent desire of the leadership of the Czechoslovak C.P. to rectify the bureaucratic and authoritarian distortions of socialism carried by the previous leadership but nobody can overlook the fact that the present leadership has swung over to the other extreme.

Economic Programme :

The Action Programme recommends free market economy as a measure for regeneration of the National Economy of Czechoslovakia. Although this plan has some resemblance with the Lieberman and Birmanu models now being used in part in the Soviet Union, the inadequate emphasis on overall planning, in contrast to the sharp criticism of its inadequacies and short comings, gives rise to misapprehensions. The formulations like : "The plan and the national economic policy must appear as a positive force....." sounds unconvincing when read

with the rest of the paragraph in which abstract and demagogic phrases like ".....society must do the planning with due insight and perspective" have been added.

Although the existence of the socialist market is no longer considered an anachronism, nevertheless, socialist society places certain priorities in concurrence with its objective of full utilization of the productions capacities, economic development of the socialist system as such, helping the underdeveloped countries and welfare of the people in general. At the same time it has also to strengthen defence arrangements against possible imperialist attacks. Relegation of the Central Planning to a minor insignificant position, as the Action Programme proposes, will certainly create serious problems and may open the economy to undesirable infiltrations.

The emphasis on profitability as the sole criterion for determining usefulness or otherwise of an enterprise has some serious disadvantages under the existing conditions in Czechoslovakia ; where the Slovak region is still comparatively underdeveloped and investments in that region are not likely to be as profitable as in the developed areas in Czechia.

The independence of enterprises, without the restraining control of centralized plan, may lead to increasing investment in modernising plants and equipments, more often imported, creating a conflict with the capital required for overall economic development.

The Central Committee is wastfully looking towards the Western market for their economic regeneration, while remaining non-committal about the effect of economic co-operation with the socialist camp. Nowhere has the Action Programme mentioned the fact that it is the economic co-operation of the socialist states which has made the tremendous growth of Czechoslovak economy possible during the last 20 years. All that the Action Programme has to say is "The inclusion of the Republic in the system of socialist states brought substantial changes in the direction of development of the national ecoo-

nomy and also in its internal structure, the character of the state and the social order."

One is free to infer that the effect of the co-operation with socialist states is not only disadvantageous the Czechoslovakia but is also an interference in the sovereignty of the country. No wonder that reactionary forces in Czechoslovakia took up this clue to demand breaking of economic ties with Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

However, statistics indicate an entirely different picture. Except for a short spell of growth retardation during 1965 due to continued bad harvest and other factors, Czechoslovak industrial

output registered a continuous annual growth rate of more than 6-7 per cent while in Western countries this rate was declining to 2.5 to 3 per cent.

On the whole there can hardly be any doubt that the Action Programme is not based on an objective understanding of the existing conditions. Its utopian platitudes coupled with deification of pre-war bourgeois leadership, glorification of the period between 1945-48, under-estimation of the strength of anti-socialist forces belittling the role of the Communist Party and its non-recognition of the role of the economic cooperation with socialist countries in developing inter-

nal economy, give rise to serious misgivings, subsequent events have justified these apprehension.

Progressive people everywhere support the Czechoslovak leadership in their effort to eradicate past distortions of socialism. Nevertheless laws of social development follow a scientific path. Tendencious and subjective assessment of history and correct situations cannot show the correct path of development. It is hoped that recent unfortunate developments have already set the Czechoslovak leadership to re-thinking and a more objective plan for building an edifice of enduring socialism coupled with democracy.

Mainstream has kept open this Discussion on Czechoslovakia since the beginning of September. This will be closed with the publication of further contributions next week, the last issue of November.

—Editor

RACE TO THE MOON *(Continued from page 28)*

machine, instead of man with his frail organism, sent to the hostile conditions of the moon, is certainly much more useful and productive from the point of view and needs of scientific observation.

Well, we want to reach the moon simply because it is there, as Irving and Mallory, martyrs of the Mt. Everest expedition in 1924 once remarked when faced with a similar question: Man's insatiable curiosity drives him on to conquer the unknown without which he would not be man and all progress is sure to stop. But there is also a practical reason for undertaking a voyage to the moon.

Our moon holds the key to the many secrets of the solar system, indeed of the universe itself. We have already noted that the earth-moon are twin planets born

contemporaneously in our hoary cosmic past. If moon is a smaller earth, the tempting tantalising prospect on reaching the moon is to be able to study our own earth in its infancy, in all its pristine purity. Here on earth, the effect of the atmosphere, the flow of oceans and rivers have washed almost the entire birthmarks of the earth. It is well high impossible to get an exact picture of the earth in its infancy and hence to find out how it was really born. So far we have had to depend on a certain amount of intelligent scientific speculations and conjectures to arrive at an understanding of the history of the earth and the solar system.

Life also originated on earth, now we know, based on a combination of carbon, hydrogen, nitro-

gen, ammonia or methane with a sprinkling of water-vapour, and subjected to heavy millions of electron-volts discharges from the ultra-violet rays of the Sun. Such a condition will never recur again, because the ionosphere which developed later (after the dawn of life on earth) now blocks out the Sun's ultra-violet rays.

We will be able to get an exact answer to all these intriguing questions, once we have reached the moon. There in a perfect vacuum condition, uncorroded by atmosphere we will be able to study for the first time at first hand sources the history of our planet and the solar system, also of life on earth.

Man today does no longer cry for the moon. He will pluck the moon from the sky and plant it in the diadem of man's destiny.

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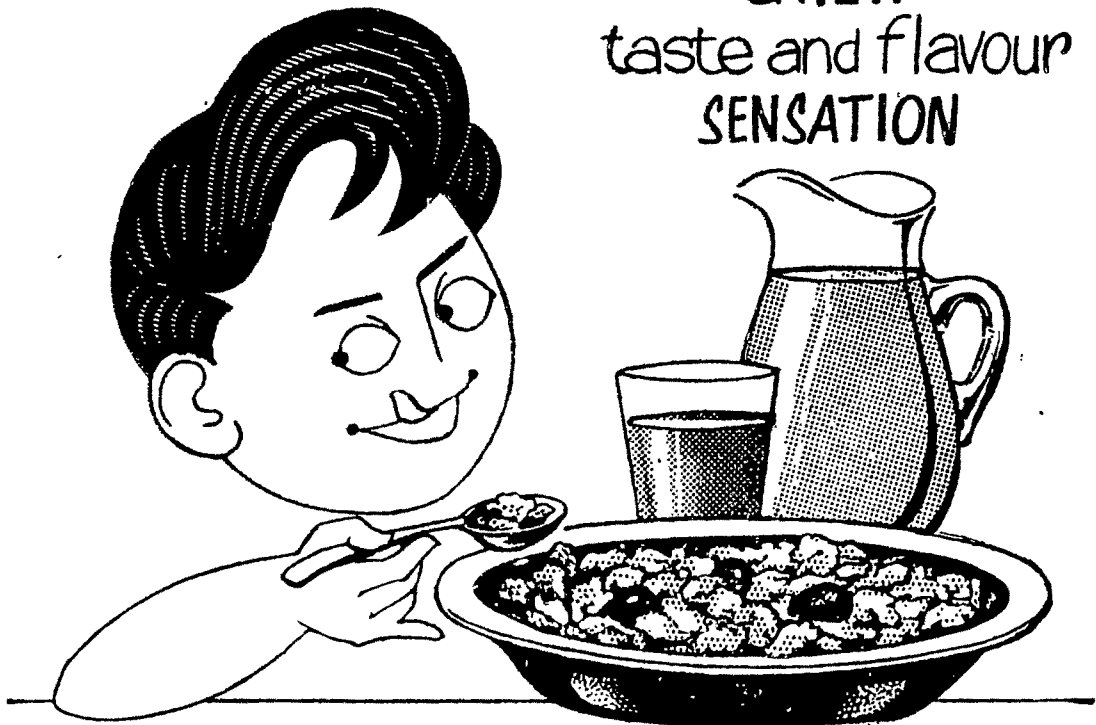
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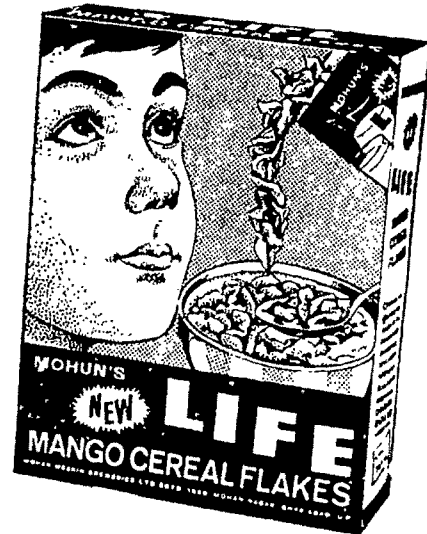
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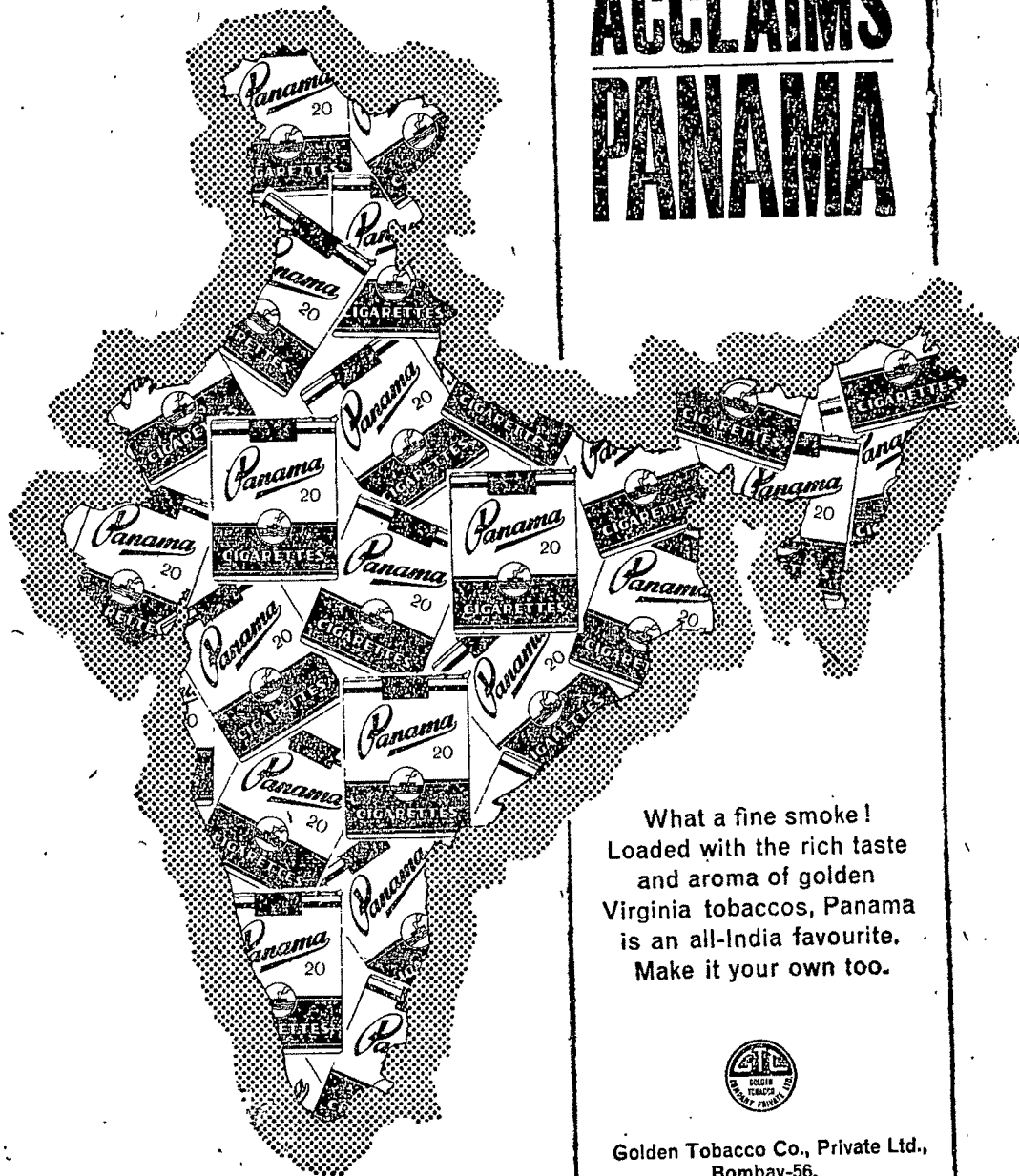
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CONSTITUTION AND THE PEOPLE

THE opposition that has developed within the Congress Parliamentary Party to Sri Nath Pai's Constitution (Amendment) Bill despite its acceptance in principle by the Union Cabinet is not surprising because of the known preponderance of conservative and reactionary opinion in that party. Critics of the Bill in the Congress and outside it take the position that the Fundamental Rights inscribed in the Constitution by its framers are immutable and unalterable for all time. The main concern of the critics is obviously that the property rights they consider sacrosanct should not be "tampered with" irrespective of what the people as a whole feel about the effect of such rights on their aspiration to establish a society based on equality and social justice as envisaged in the Constitution.

It is patently untenable to hold that the Constitution-makers were in any way more representative of public opinion than the Houses of Parliament or to argue that what they laid down in a given situation should be accepted by the people as eternal and unchangeable wisdom. A detailed written Constitution like ours, which has in addition taken a great deal from the unwritten Constitution of Britain, is bound to bring up considerations which should be resolved from time to time on the basis of popular will as ascertainable through Parliament, of course taking the precautions necessary to ensure that a party holding a majority for five years does not use its strength to force down amendments which militate against the interests of the vast majority of the people.

The debates that took place in the Constituent Assembly themselves show that the framers of the Constitution were largely aware that such changes might become necessary in the future as popular consciousness grew and the social and economic goals of the nation became more sharply defined.

It cannot be doubted that the supposed sacredness of private property has led to an accentuation of the acquisitive society we inherited and to the steep widening of economic disparities in the two decades of freedom. If monopolies have grown and a small number of families have cornered the bulk of the national wealth, it is entirely due to the hugging of outmoded ideas about property which in essence subvert the rights and interests of the vast majority of the population which is condemned to poverty and privation thereby. To equate property rights in relation to the possession of small land holdings or minimum necessary housing for each family with accumulation of vast wealth is absurd, yet this is the basic sentiment that is exploited by the wealthy and the economically powerful to obstruct the basic changes required in the larger interest.

The supremacy of Parliament in the sphere of law-making can hardly be questioned except by those who find the limitations of the Constitution of immediate advantage to them. In our country the Judiciary has been vested with the power to interpret the Constitution, but instances abroad of Parliament itself being the ultimate interpreter of the Constitution are not wanting. Even in our own country, the abolition of Zamindaris would not have been possible if Parliament had not amended Article 31.

The point to remember is that a dynamic and growing society cannot be sought to be confined within the framework of a Constitution framed in a certain context; if a Constitution comes in the way of progressive measures which can take the people forward towards the establishment of an egalitarian society, that Constitution will necessarily have to go.

What Sri Nath Pai's Bill as amended by the select committee seeks to do is merely to make it abundantly clear that it is Parliament that must translate the popular will into reality by making such amendments in the Constitution as will enable the enactment of progressive laws, whether in relation to property or other rights. The select committee has provided ample safeguards to ensure that the power is not exercised for the temporary advantage of a party that may be in majority for the time being. The SSP is undoubtedly right in believing that a new Constituent Assembly must be convened for a total review of the Constitution in the changed context, but such long-term thinking should not come in the way of steps needed immediately to prevent the Constitution being utilised by entrenched interests to strengthen themselves further.

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THE MEANING OF GOENKA

SRI Ramnath Goenka, who figured prominently in Parliament last week and who according to himself for the first time in his life found it necessary to come out with a press statement in self-defence, is not an important quantity by himself; but he certainly symbolises the kind of trend in politics and economy which Congress rule has allowed to grow to sinister proportions over the years. Sri Goenka is not a tycoon of the size or influence of the Birlas or the Tatas, or even of the Jains; but he engages in such diverse activities, ranging from jute business to newspaper business, and employs such peculiar methods over a wide field without drawing undue public attention to himself, that he provides a remarkable case study for those interested in understanding the kind of "capitalism" that has been permitted to develop in this country.

The two questions that came up in Parliament last week related to the cornering of shares of the Indian Iron and Steel Company, and a bid to take over certain Gujarati newspapers and add them to the ever-expanding Express empire. The fact that Sri Goenka's name figured in respect of two such divergent and mutually unconnected affairs is an indication of the range of his operations. In the case of IISCO, Finance Minister Morarji Desai admitted in a statement in the Lok Sabha that Sri Goenka and his group had acquired in the course of the last two years several lakhs of shares of the company, and that some of the banks, which are supposed to be "socially controlled" now, had advanced huge credits for the purpose. Sri Desai said that the shares so

acquired stood in the names of companies under Sri Goenka's control, and his friends, associates and brokers. Bank funds to the extent of Rs. 2.69 crores, as also the funds of certain companies, had been utilised by the group for acquiring these shares, Sri Desai said. He added that IISCO scripts had developed certain "unhealthy trends" last year.

The fact that Sri Goenka and his group had not only utilised the funds of certain companies but had also to borrow heavily from banks has to be set against Sri Goenka's offer to buy up the *Jansatta-Loksatta* group of newspapers in Gujarat for about Rs. 60 lakhs. According to Sri Goenka's press statement, the move to purchase the newspaper group was not meant to strengthen the Express empire further but only to protect the "freedom of the Press" which Sri Goenka holds dear. It pained him greatly to find that this particular newspaper group was in great financial difficulties and about to sink, and out of the largeness of his heart he decided to find the Rs. 60 lakhs needed to take over the newspapers. Those who know Sri Goenka and his ways are bound to feel that there is much more in the transaction which did not come off than plain and simple altruism. When for acquiring IISCO shares money had to be found from such varied sources, where would the Rs. 60 lakhs have come from? That is a question which provides much food for thought.

Sri Goenka's career has been a most picturesque one. He bought the Indian Express in Madras way back in the early thirties for a nominal sum. From

that moment he has never looked back; it has in fact been one of those Success Stories. A member of the Lok Sabha hazarded the estimate that Sri Goenka's assests now stand at Rs. 10 crores or thereabouts. The point is that starting out with assests worth a few thousands in the mid-thirties, he heads a vast empire worth several crores in the mid-sixties. A small, struggling newspaper in one corner of India in the mid-thirties is today a name familiar in many States; not only does the Indian Express have editions at seven centres, but the Express empire boasts of several language newspapers as well. But the newspaper empire is only part of the Goenka network, for the family has interest in various industrial and other fields too. Sri Goenka's association with banking institutions is well known.

Sri Morarji Desai, who made several admissions about IISCO and the shares business, rejected off-hand a demand for an inquiry into the finances of the Goenka network. Sri Indrajit Gupta MP who remarked that this was because "the Congress is under obligation to Sri Goenka" may have exaggerated, but there can be little doubt that Sri Goenka and his associates wield considerable influence on those in power. Sri Desai is not the first Union Finance Minister to have felt disinclined to offend the magnate. Way back in the fifties, the Express Newspapers' income-tax assessment was held up for seven years, the tax authorities presumably not accepting the returns submitted. But at the end of this period, in a single day the whole thing was settled to the satisfaction of Express Newspapers—

reportedly on instructions from the highest level in Delhi. Sri T. T. Krishnamachari was in-charge of the Finance portfolio at the Centre at that time. The ramifications of such influence not only at the Centre but also in some of the States might indeed be a fruitful field of study.

The present writer can claim some familiarity only with one aspect of Sri Goenka's extensive activities, namely, his rôle in the newspaper industry. In Madras, when he first established himself as a newspaper magnate, he had the reputation of being a dare-devil. Few ever took his claim to be a 'journalist' out to defend the freedom of the Press very seriously. He has always played his cards cleverly, and has often managed to place persons in power under obligation to him. Even before independence he was an active element in Madras politics; those close to him in those days believed that he fancied himself in the rôle of king-maker in the Congress Party of the State. After independence he certainly was very close to one or other group in the Congress leadership and in the State Government. Some of the Congress leaders of the State were frequently seen at his house for long closed-door sessions. He had the reputation too of acting as intermediary between local groups and certain personalities in the central leadership of the Congress and in the Union Government. It is not surprising, in view of the value of this magnate to the Congress politicians of Madras State in that period, that he was made a member of the Constituent Assembly and Parliament. Some said it was Sri Kamaraj's gift to him for having helped the TNCC chief (as Sri Kamaraj then was) against Sri C. Rajagopalachari. Sri Goenka overestimated his capacity to win friends and influence people only once—when he decided to contest the elections to the first Lok Sabha, he lost heavily.

Sri Goenka's enormous influence with the Congress leaders of Madras and the State Government helped him to put down his workers. In 1951, when there was a strike in Express Newspapers' Madras unit, it was his

influence that broke the back of the workers. A Madras Minister told a few pressmen a little before the strike was to commence that the Government would not allow the strike to succeed; he went to the extent of saying that the Government would provide strike-breakers if necessary. In the event this proved unnecessary, for the massive deployment of the police force ensured that the strikers would be kept at a great distance from the Express Estates. Those press workers whom the management had kept within the compound were able to bring out the paper, and the strike collapsed. What happened in 1959 contrasted sharply with the events of eight years before. The latter strike clearly brought out the difference that official patronage or the lack of it can make. By 1959 Sri Goenka's relationship with Sri Kamaraj had become far from cordial. Attempts to get the Government to browbeat the workers failed, and the strike was a total success. Unlike in 1951 the workers, including working journalists and clerical staff, were allowed to conduct peaceful demonstrations at the gate—in 1951 the police had driven away the strikers without mercy but in 1959 they had instructions not to interfere unless there was threat of violence; the police did not have any occasion to intervene, for the workers were completely peaceful and non-violent even in the face of deliberate provocation. It was only awareness that the Government could not be used to put down the workers that made the Express management announce "closure"—and it was only four and a half years later that the papers resumed publication from Madras.

The reason that led to the 1959 strike throw some light on Sri Goenka's methods. A few months earlier, following demonstrations demanding proper implementation of the D.A. award, there was a settlement binding on the two parties for 2½ years. However, shortly afterwards the Express management went ahead with moves to split up the company, at a time when the Wage Committee for working journalists

was working out its award. The one company which was running several newspapers at different centres was to be split up into a number of small companies, many of them without material assets; all quite legitimate in the eyes of the law relating to companies but clearly meant to deprive the workers of the benefits of the huge profits that the single company was making. The management refused to discuss the question with the workers' union, and the employees were faced with a fait accompli. Hence the strike. Not only trade union leaders of Madras State but a number of leading politicians also supported the workers' legitimate struggle; among those who addressed the workers more than once at the gate was Sri C.N. Annadurai, the present Chief Minister. That Sri Annadurai backed the workers despite the union being under the Congress flag was considered significant at that time. All this is mentioned to show firstly, what the position will be if official patronage and police support is not given to industrialists, and secondly, the trend of popular opinion in Madras State about Sri Goenka and his newspaper empire not so long ago.

The way the Express empire expanded over the years is not without its interesting aspects. In the earlier stages—and presumably now also—whenever a particular unit started showing profits, the expansion itch would develop. Thus, when the parent unit at Madras, made up of three successful newspapers in three different languages, began yielding noticeable profits, the Bombay edition was launched. There was, too, an abortive attempt at a Calcutta edition; that failed due to factors for which Sri Goenka had not bargained. Soon afterwards the vast Express Estates were acquired in the heart of Madras City and a multi-storeyed building was put up. The buildings in Bombay and Delhi came much later. For the Delhi building a huge sum had been advanced by the State Bank of India—more than Rs. 50 lakhs. New and costly machinery was imported for the different editions. A senior officer of the

Madras Government once told this writer that the State Government was unable to persuade the Central authorities to issue enough licences to purchase a set of linotype machines abroad for urgently needed replacement in the Government Press, but that Sri Goenka's concern was able to secure in a trice licences for a much larger number of lino machines as well as for a huge rotary machine.

Much of the expansion of the Express empire has taken place during a period when the Government's declared policy has been not to allocate newsprint quota for new editions planned by chains and groups. The original Madras edition was split up into two editions, one from Vijayawada and the other from Chittoor. Now the Chittoor edition has been shifted to Bangalore in view of the friendly attitude of the Mysore Government. When the Madras editions were closed and the other ones—with the exceptions of the Delhi edition—were announced to have been transferred to different companies, newsprint did not present a problem. The new companies obtained their newsprint from Madras, obtained under the Actual User's Licence by the Express Newspapers Ltd. This was not taken up by the Central authorities despite protest by the workers and even a satyagraha campaign. The Ahmedabad edition was started only early this year, but the Central Government, so concerned about protecting the Gujarati group from takeover by Sri Goenka, did not deign to take notice of the development. Nor did it display any anxiety over a similar edition started at Ahmedabad by the Jain empire (Times of India group). Evidently those concerned had decided to keep the vaunted newsprint "policy" in cold storage for the time being. This writer understands that Sri Goenka is now buying up a Congress daily of Calcutta, although the fact is not likely to be announced till after the elections.

As for "freedom of the Press" which Shri Goenka claims to uphold, suffice it to say that editors like the late Khasa Subba Rau did not stay very long in the

Indian Express. Only Sri Frank Moraes has been able to stick to the job for long years. Sri Moraes gave evidence before the Wage Committee for Working Journalists on behalf of the management of Express Newspapers, sitting alongside Sri Goenka himself. Sri Moraes' evidence was meant to convey to the Committee the impression that in the Bombay papers incompetent fools had been employed as journalists and were being retained in their jobs solely because of the employer's charitable disposition. Not long ago a special correspondent of the Express group stationed in Delhi had to quit for the crime of having given importance to the views of the Kamaraj camp in his reports. In the power equations at the Centre at the time, Sri Goenka had cast his lot with others in the leadership, and the correspondent had to pay the price for failing to act accordingly, by submitting his resignation. The fact that a senior journalist on the staff had to run a front-page column under a pseudonym during the days preceding the Indira Gandhi-Morarji Desai contest, duly reflecting the changing positions of his boss, is well known to journalists in the Capital.

Sri Goenka is neither an industrialist in the sense in which the word is understood, say, in Europe or Britain, nor a journalist in the sense in which this term is understood anywhere in the world. It is rather difficult to define him without risk. What must be clear to our leaders is that so long as the economy is allowed to remain the plaything of such elements, and so long as these same elements also control the bulk of the newspaper industry, neither the economy nor the Press can be democratic or independent, or useful to the people.

The decision to prevent the take over of the Gujarati papers by offering a loan of Rs. 25 lakhs to them may be welcome in a limited sense, but such steps do not provide a worthwhile answer to the threat to democracy posed by adventurers playing for high stakes. The hold of industrial houses over the news-

paper industry, which Jawaharlal Nehru looked upon with increasing concern towards the end of his life, cannot be ended by decisions of this kind to assist a chosen newspaper here or there. It does not require much intelligence to see that the loan move does not represent a clear change in policy. What in fact is required is a policy decision to implement the recommendations of the Press Commission in full and then to take such other action as is necessary to end monopoly and enable small newspapers to survive and flourish. In the case of the Gujarati papers, Sri K. K. Shah has talked about a trust being formed, but has not stated if, and how, control being vested in the very owners who brought these papers to the present pass will be prevented. A trust is not necessarily trustworthy; instances of certain families forming trusts to make money by other than means direct profit and dividend are not unknown in the newspaper industry. The point is that any trust formed should command public confidence and the journalists in the newspapers concerned should have the decisive voice in respect of their policies and news content. Also, there will be anxiety that the fact of Government having put in such a lot of money should not become an excuse for official interference with editorial policy.

But whatever the future of the newspaper group in Gujarat, the larger question that remains is whether the Government has the courage and the moral authority to stand up to the industrial tycoons and adventurers and speculators owning and controlling the biggest newspapers in the country, as well as news agencies. There is little indication that the Government can show the kind of "toughness" it is able to display in dealing with underpaid and exploited employees when it comes to dealing with the powerful industrial houses which by means of donations and unashamed corruption maintain and constantly tighten their hold over the administrative machinery as well as over politicians in power. Sri

Motilal Desai's statement about the IISCO shares makes this clear enough. The Reserve Bank has not been able to prevent the acquisition of shares by the use of credits from banks contrary to the RBI's policy directives. Sri Desai and the RBI are unwilling to take speedy action which is possible and desirable, for fear of what will happen to the sacred "market." Sri Desai has talked of "liquidating" the Goenka holdings; subsequently it

has been reported that there have been purchases of IISCO shares by a "bull operator." Sri Desai has admitted that he is in no position to nationalise IISCO in spite of all that has been happening because of a "commitment" made to the World Bank that it will not be taken over.

Sri Goenka and his group are thus only a symbol of the many interlocked factors that hold our independence and our economy

to ransom, in addition to preventing measures in fulfilment not only of the promise to take the country along the road to socialism but even of the proclamation that the "commanding heights of the economy" will be brought under public control. Sri Goenka is the emblem of the total collapse of morality at the highest levels of administration in the country. This is the nation's tragedy today.

—C.N.C.

ECONOMIC NOTEBOOK

CHALLENGE OF THE PLAN

At a meeting recently of some prominent economists and some important Congress MPs who like to take active and serious interest in problems of economic policy the question was asked: what can be the feasible rate of growth with our present economic capacity and capability? Prompt came the reply from an economist who is closely connected with the analysis of our current economic situation but is not directly involved in plan-making as such, that given an effective food distribution system the economy was quite capable of showing as high a growth rate as 10 per cent in the next five years. This startled many of those present who have been so often told that even a 5 to 6 per cent growth rate in the new Fourth Plan proposed by the Planning Commission is much too ambitious and difficult to realise.

What this really highlights is the fact that given proper management of our existing physical resources in agriculture and industry created by development in the first phase of planning, there is nothing to hold back rapid economic development. What stand in the way are not strictly economic factors. The hurdles really are non-economic—social and political. When the Planning Commission puts forth 5 to 6 per cent as the feasible growth rate for the next Plan, it takes into account

precisely such hurdles, and its assumption is that the constraints imposed by the prevailing social and political situation cannot be removed to the extent needed to realise the full potential of the process of development. There are, of course, even bigger sceptics than the Planning Commission, and they are not to be found only in the Right wing of our social and political spectrum. Those who find the social and political restraints galling and demand radical recasting of property relations, specially in land, have also convinced themselves, after the bitter experience of last 18 years of planning, that any kind of growth is just impossible in the present social and political conditions.

In the present crucial phase of Fourth Plan making, the issue thus is, how far will the Planning Commission be allowed to formulate a plan which will chart out a course and a "programme of action" which will realise the maximum growth potential of the economy in the given social and political conditions—lacking revolution in property relations and social structure of society as Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission D.R. Gadgil likes to say (a revolution which, Dr. Gadgil stresses, cannot be made by the Planning Commission but is the business of other forces in society). The current controversy in the Government—which

should really involve wider sections of people—is precisely around this basic issue. Yojana Bhavan is wearing a brighter and more assured look than has been the case for a long time after the last full session of the Planning Commission in which the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister participated. This is because Deputy Chairman Gadgil at the meeting put the issue sharply and squarely before the leaders of the Government and pinned them down to taking positions without equivocation.

The immediate gains of the meeting were, of course, rather formal. Dr. Gadgil was able to declare after the meeting that there was no question of another postponement in plan-making and that the Commission was determined to prepare and launch the new Fourth Plan beginning from April next year. The creeping feeling that the familiar drift of the present Government in taking decisions will result in yet another annual Plan was thus scotched. It was obviously clear to the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister—as indeed it should have been to the whole Cabinet—that having no Plan at all would be politically disastrous, even if planned development posed the need to take serious and probably painful decisions. Dr. Gadgil took advantage of this to have the commitment for

launching the Plan at the scheduled time reiterated.

Another gain, again somewhat formal, was the decision that the Union Cabinet and the Standing Committee of the National Development Council, which includes all the Chief Ministers and heads of State Governments, must meet during this month to consider and decide on the basic parameters of the Plan so that the Planning Commission can accordingly prepare the Draft Outline of the Fourth Plan for presentation at the full session of the NDC in January. These decisions were accompanied by the presentation of the Plan parameters as evolved by the Commission on the basis of its assessment of economic factors as well as practical feasibility and a Note on the policy issues involved for the Cabinet to make up its mind and accept firm commitments and responsibilities on their basis.

The Planning Commission under Dr. Gadgil has been extremely careful right from the beginning not to assume responsibilities which rightly belonged to the Government and the political leadership. This pertains specially to the type and quantum of effort, including resource-raising and management of available economic assets which the realisation of agreed goals of the Plan will require. It is for the Government to commit itself to such effort clearly and unequivocally if the Plan, as formulated, is to have a chance of becoming effective. In accepting the commitments, it is again for the Government to evaluate and reckon with the social and political constraints confronting it. The Planning Commission, for its part, is willing to give advice and has done so, and it is for the Government now to accept, reject or modify its advice and accept responsibility for its decisions before the people.

The Planning Commission is again being very careful to avoid being drawn into sterile ideological and policy debates at the present stage. Dr. Gadgil's commitment to an effective policy-frame for planning is widely known, and he attributed many of the

failures of planning in the past to the absence of such a policy-frame. But after joining the Commission as its working chief, the experience he has gained appears to have convinced him that it will be futile to educate the present political leadership and the Government to commit itself to the right kind of effective policy-frame—largely because he appears to have realised that it is a weak Government subject to conflicting pulls and pressures. Even while he has a policy-frame before him and all his proposals on Plan formulation stem from it, he has given up the idea of making its acceptance the condition for effective Plan-making and planning process. Instead, he is more insistent on working out an effective "programme of action" which will be acceptable to the Government and the country, even if the acceptance is based on totally pragmatic grounds and without commitment to a comprehensive policy-frame as such. This may ultimately prove a major weakness of planning itself, and may in effect undermine the proposed programme of action in the process of implementation but, in the given rapidly changing political situation, this appears to be a practical course.

The basic parameters of the Plan or the programme of action being proposed by the Commission, which is now before the Cabinet and will later go before the NDC-committee on Nov. 29, are reported to relate to the question of resources. If 5 to 6 per cent growth rate is to be achieved, the Planning Commission has made it clear that the Government must accept responsibility to raise additional resources amounting to at least Rs. 4,000 crores during the Fourth Plan period. This assumes deficit financing of the order of Rs. 1,000 crores and a net foreign aid inflow of about Rs. 2,250 crores. Another important assumption is that by firm handling of the food distribution system and sensitive areas of internal trade through operation of buffer stocks and controlled distributive network at least for the poorer sections, the price line will be rendered stable and non-

Plan expenditure will not run away with resources meant for the plan. Also, the expenditure on defence is assumed to remain at the present level. Finally, export earnings are assumed to increase at the rate of 7 per cent per annum. In the event of all these efforts forthcoming—and the Planning Commission believes that such a scale of effort can and should be made—it will be possible to plan a public sector investment of about Rs. 15,000 crores and achieve a growth rate of about 6 per cent. With better management of the economy and more efficient use of capital and human resources than is the case at present, an even more rapid growth rate may become possible.

In the Cabinet, it appears, an attempt is on to reduce the issues involved in the Planning Commission's scheme to the problem of additional taxation only and to make the whole thing look like a problem of merely determining the size of the new Fourth Plan. As was to be expected, in these terms the Finance Minister can only throw up his hands at having to raise so much additional taxation when there is so much clamour for reducing taxes. Dr. Gadgil, on the other hand, has warned the Cabinet of the disastrous consequences for the present and the future if the necessary effort in all directions indicated by the Commission is not accepted and seriously made.

There is no doubt that in the making of this effort many policy decisions of significance touching the lives of all sections of the people, not only in the matter of levying various taxes but also income and goods distribution, will have to be taken. The decision about plan size in the public sector and the additional resources for it will in fact imply a whole host of social and political decisions. The Government leadership is confronted with having to accept the plan commitments in this context. The decision finally taken will be the yardstick to measure the seriousness with which planned development is accepted by the present government and its political will and strength.

—B.R.M.

King Canute's 'Copter Mission

ROBERT McNamara confessed in Calcutta that in his two-day visit to the city he found "some similarities" with his visits to Saigon as US Defence Secretary.

With his mobility largely confined to helicopter rides, it is but natural for McNamara to have remembered his Vietnamese experience, for the reason for avoidance of the normal automobile drives was essentially the same in both cases—fear of confrontation with the angry local population. Calcutta's hot reception to McNamara—led by the United Front parties minus the SSP—was a measure of the mass revulsion against American barbarities in Vietnam.

While protest was heard against the impressive demonstrations against McNamara from frankly pro-American elements like Sri Humayun Kabir, the argument trotted out by them has been that these might spoil the chances of getting World Bank loans for Calcutta's urgent development programme; in other words, the money lender should be given the red carpet.

Apart from the patent servility behind such a mentality—the gentlemen concerned have practically ceased to think in terms of national self-respect—it betrays a lack of political understanding of the impelling motive behind the McNamara visit to this trouble-tossed city. It was not that the US authorities did not have prior information about the demonstrations; the United Front had announced its programme days ahead. In fact, McNamara had made preparations for this visit to Calcutta long ago: during his discussions here with the various agencies engaged in re-

planning the city, it was found that McNamara had carefully studied all the briefs sent to him in advance. So, while Michael Stewart could afford to keep Calcutta out of his Indian itinerary despite Calcutta's long history under British Raj, the World Bank chief made it a point to visit this city, for here was one of the key objectives of his entire Asian tour.

Propaganda preparations for the McNamara visit had been going on for months. *New York Times Magazine* published as early as October 13 a long article by its India Correspondent, and one of its captions significantly asked: "Can India Survive Calcutta?" The politics of the article was revealed in the key sentence carefully hidden behind a lot of verbiage: "Indeed, if Bengal is to be a model again for the rest of India, it could only be by becoming a graveyard for the democratic-institutions Bengalis helped to create." The Red bogey is brought in very subtly—there are references to the United Front's "nine disastrous and delirious months of non-government"; there are bouquets for Dharma Vira's bureaucracy: "Already the civil servants who have been serving as caretakers in the State since the collapse of the last government of politicians are telling themselves they can run Calcutta better than party hacks". And *New York Times* is not only American paper to put the focus on Calcutta. *Time* news magazine is also preparing a long feature on this city.

It was clear that McNamara's Calcutta visit was part of US global prospecting for a new strategy against Asian people after its ignominious fiasco at the

hands of the Vietnamese people. In fact, his entire tour is meant to help prepare the new Nixon line on this part of the world after the debacle of the Johnson policy.

In this survey tour, Calcutta holds a key position. For long, US experts on India—whether diplomats or publicists—have been looking upon West Bengal, much more perhaps than Kerala, as the main Red base in this country: it is possible that apart from the powerful influence of the Left movement in this State, they have a geopolitical approach. And after the setback in Vietnam, US policy-makers have to think of new frontiers against Communism. A strong body of opinion in Washington has already begun to realise the futility of the policy of direct military offensive after the humiliating defeat of US policy at the hands of Ho Chi Minh. McNamara is one of them, and it is significant that he switched over from the Pentagon to the World Bank for pursuing the same objective of furthering US imperialist designs in Asia. American terror bombs having failed to crush the freedom-loving Asian peoples, the attempt is to be to subvert their independence by massive inflow of the dollar.

It is for the purpose of projecting this new strategy that McNamara came to Calcutta, stomaching the humiliation of having to ride by helicopter (which incidentally no leader from the Socialist world has had to do in any part of India).

The American effort to establish a foothold in Calcutta has a long history. The Ford Foundation has been spending a lot of money arranging Ameri-

can consultancy for the Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organisation. During Kennedy's presidency, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal, Dr. B.C. Roy, was invited to the White House—bypassing the Indian Embassy in Washington—in which an active role was played by the late Sudhir Ghosh, who had specialised in 'outing' for the Americans in various fields. And this interview was devoted to the question of Calcutta's development plans.

But the Left-ward trend in West Bengal could not be checked. Came the 1967 General Election and the formation of the United Front Government in which Communist ascendancy was undeniable. The manipulations behind the scenes were accompanied by large-scale fund disbursements in relation to which the American agencies were often mentioned: even US Consulate staff members were found to be in close company with prominent crusaders against the United Front.

Governor Dharma Vira's role as the Centre's gauleiter against the United Front Ministry has been adequately exposed. Not so well known perhaps are his close links with the Americans. Knowledgeable circles in Calcutta and New Delhi can vouch for the fact that US Ambassador Chester Bowles has often expressed admiration for Governor Vira and even conceded to some of his requests.

Recently has come to light the story of a deal which Bowles was about to finalise with Dharma Vira just after the imposition of Governor Raj in West Bengal: the deal would have gone through but for last-minute Central objection. In March last, Bowles came to Calcutta and made a straight offer of Rs. 50 crores for Calcutta's development plans; the money was to come from the PL 480 counterpart funds which the US Embassy controls. This was preceded by quiet discussions between West Bengal bureaucrats and USAID chief John Lewis. Dharma Vira was enthusiastic about the offer.

But New Delhi raised objections. For one thing, it was

felt that it would be a dangerous precedent if a foreign Government made outright grants to a State Government. Secondly, Sri Moraji Desai, who has practically written off West Bengal, felt that if US money was available, other metropolitan cities should have a share in the pie—and since there were no readymade development programmes for Delhi, Bombay and Madras, the Bowles offer could not be considered.

Dharma Vira, however, did not give up hope. He has been making repeated representations to New Delhi for funds.

This time, McNamara's offer has come as a World Bank credit. The idea is to break initial New Delhi resistance by the offer of what may be euphemistically called a purely commercial credit, since the World Bank as a bank is interested in offering credit for West Bengal's development.

So McNamara held long sessions with CMPO authorities, talked of the future of the local engineering industry, of food production in West Bengal, the Sunderbans development project, health and family planning; discussed the future of Calcutta port and had coffee with a sprinkling of industrialists and economists, apart from management experts from the heavily-US financed Indian Institute of Management. The talks were thus not about the drainage and transport of Calcutta, but practically every aspect of West Bengal's economy, going into details of West Bengal's Fourth Plan programmes. To no other State in India has the World Bank chief paid so much care and attention.

At the end of it all, Sri Dharma Vira was happy. He could not help telling the press, "I personally think the World Bank will help us." For he found McNamara's "reaction was favourable to all our requirements as he understood our problems. He is anxious to help us." Dharma Vira's main problem, of course, is to contain Communism, and naturally this tallies with McNamara's anxiety to help him.

It is not yet clear what line the new Nixon Administration will

follow in regard to Asian countries. Obviously, the entire aid programme including World Bank representations have to wait for the sanction of the new US Congress. However, the Bowles strategy with regard to West Bengal seems to be as follows: New Delhi is unable to break the Left hold in West Bengal, and local pro-West elements have almost exhausted their potentialities for preventing or toppling a new United Front Government (whatever may be Sri Kabir's public prattle); so it is time the American presence is urgently established. If large-scale World Bank investment is made in Calcutta and West Bengal, Washington will have a claim to interfere here; and the massive dollar investment will provide the alibi for opening the gates. Besides, any improvement in civic amenities in Calcutta is expected to soften prevailing hostility to America. This way, a new front against the Red offensive can be built.

A very significant point in McNamara's Calcutta discussion came up in his seemingly innocuous emphasis on "the need for suitable organisational efforts to implement the plan" of Calcutta's development. On the face of it, one can hardly take any objection to it. But this has to be read in the context of the Ford Foundation consultants' recommendation that a separate administrative body—Calcutta Metropolitan Authority—should be set up. This body will be independent of the State Government and will be in the nature of a Centrally-administered authority. In other words, the authority of any future Left-led United Front over Calcutta is sought to be curbed by this means. And it is known that Calcutta is more than half of West Bengal's politics today.

What is the political base of this new American strategy with regard to West Bengal? It is here that McNamara's pow-wow with Big Business in Calcutta becomes significant. In this, the pride of place has been given to the house of Birlas, just as in Bombay the Tatas dominated as McNamara's host. At Sri

(Continued on page 38)

Results of India's Policy Lapses

K. M. P.

THE prospect of American withdrawal from South Vietnam has created a state of flux in South-East Asia, and it is only reasonable that India should review its policy towards the region. For South-East Asia, along with West Asia and the east coast of Africa, is of vital interest to India, and any change in the balance of power in these areas will not be without repercussions in the whole Indian Ocean region.

Yet, apart from West Asia, we have no active foreign policy in any of the countries of this vast area; in West Asia, thanks mainly to the links established during the struggle for independence, we were able to establish close and beneficial relations with the United Arab Republic. In South-East Asia on the other hand we have allowed matters to drift; at the time of independence not only the prestige of our country but the role we played in the Indonesian struggle had established our pre-eminence in the region. We were expected to play an active and leading role in the affairs and South-East Asia, but our preoccupation with European and world problems led to neglect of this region which is of primary interest to us.

Our interest in South-East Asia was concentrated on Vietnam and Indonesia. The colonial war and

later American intervention had made Vietnam the focal point in South-East Asia, but there was very little we could do except protest at American bombing and appeal for a change in Washington's policy. Though we expressed our concern over American policy, there did not develop in India the kind of mass movement of protest which has been a feature in many European countries—not only in France but also in Britain and the Scandinavian countries. By and large public opinion was not mobilised; the demonstrations in India were not comparable to those in the European countries. This apparent lack of interest is mainly due to the fact that foreign policy and public opinion are kept in two watertight compartments, and except on Pakistan and foreign aid, public opinion remains mute. Discussions even in Parliament are confined to broad generalisations about policy—non-alignment, neutrality, relations with the two super-powers and Kashmir seem to be the limit of our interest. In this atmosphere it is difficult for foreign policy to be effective, national objectives remain undefined and external relations become more and more concerned with trade and economic matters.

In South-East Asia our major objective should be to maintain the independence and sovereignty of every State and to prevent the establishment of domination by any single State. At

present the gravest threat to the security of the region comes from the political instability of the established regimes and the fear that China might exploit this to its own advantage. This has already taken place in Indonesia, where under Soekarno's leadership the two countries were co-ordinating not only their foreign policies but also economic policies.

It is not necessary for a country to be Communist or even have a strong Communist Party to establish cordial relations with China; there need only be what it considers a vital interest that can be furthered by alliance with Peking. Pakistan is an example; it aspires to settle the Kashmir issue in its favour with Chinese help. Jakarta, too, was following a similar policy; it hoped to change the balance of power in South East-Asia in its favour. The Malaysian confrontation would have assumed a different form if there had been no Peking-Jakarta axis. The point to be noted about Indonesia is that as its relations with China improved, it became more and more hostile to India and in a moment of pique Soekarno renamed the Indian Ocean and even claimed the Andamans. And even more important, the close link with China has been followed by complete dependence on America, and anti-Communism has been raised to the level of a principle. It is this double danger—from Peking and Washington—that South-East Asia

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has to guard against, and only the presence of a stabilising factor can prevent the area from becoming a battle-ground where China and the US test their strength.

Neutralisation

The most preferable method would be neutralisation of the region with international guarantees. This, as the experience of Laos shows, does not prevent either ideological subversion or even outright political and military intervention. The countries of the region will have to depend on their internal strength, but a regional alliance will be of considerable help. Till now the so-called regional alliances have been mainly of foreign inspiration; the ASPAC, the ASEAN and the SEATO are all subservient to the US State Department. A truly South-East Asian regional organisation cannot ignore the successor States of former Indo-China; indeed, there is every reason to believe that only a loose confederation of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos can be the base on which a regional organisation can be built. It might be argued that since North Vietnam is Communist, and in Laos and South Vietnam the Communist movements are strong, this might lead to the creation of a powerful Communist state in South-East Asia. This argument is not valid for the threat is not posed by Communism but by China, and Vietnam for a considerable period will be engaged in economic reconstruction. But before a confederation of Indo-Chinese States can be created, it is imperative that Vietnam should be united. A divided Vietnam will remain a threat to peace. With a reconstituted Indo-China as its centre, it will be possible to create an alliance of stability. It is possible that Thailand might at first be unwilling to join such an alliance, but the Thai politicians have never been guided by ideology; they are realists, and if they consider the alliance an effective barrier to China they will join it. Thailand has been the successive ally of Japan, France and Britain and the

United States, and if national interests demand it, Thai politicians will gladly become the ally of Peking. A regional alliance which includes Vietnam will convince the Thais that a major effort will be made to preserve the independence of the member-countries and they will most probably join it.

An Indo-Chinese confederation can only be of the loosest sort; it will merely co-ordinate the defence and economic policies of the member-countries. There can be no interference in the internal affairs of member-states, and like the Swiss countries, the member-states will be able to control all that affects their daily lives. Coordination is all that is possible for both Laos and Cambodia are suspicious of Vietnamese expansionism.

Strange Alliance

A regional alliance which leaves out Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia may appear rather strange. Malaysia and Singapore are closely linked with Australia and Britain. Canberra maintains troops and two squadrons of fighters in Malaysia, and thus its inclusion will mean the intrusion of an external power into the alliance. Australia might pretend to be a regional power, but it is merely an extension of Europe into Asia. Indonesia is like Britain, not wholly belonging to South-East Asia, and by its population resources and size will tend to dominate the alliance. Like India and Japan it too should be on the sidelines, where it can play an important supporting role. Indonesia, moreover, will be politically unstable for a long time, and its dependence on American and Japanese bankers is likely to increase. Its membership of the alliance will introduce an imponderable element which might lead to a breakdown.

India, if it is to play an effective role in South-East Asia, can no longer content itself with talk and statements. It will have to be one of the architects of the new alliance. Till now political contacts with South-East Asian countries have been at a mini-

mum; Cambodia and Thailand are India's neglected neighbours. With Burma fortunately there has been a tradition of bilateral contacts, though except for the agreement about Naga tribals, no concrete steps have been taken to establish political relations. What has been done with Burma has not been attempted with the other countries—except for Malaysia and Singapore. There are diplomatic missions, but without a policy diplomatic activity becomes meaningless. Even the Prime Minister's visit to Malaysia and Singapore was not genuinely a South-East Asian visit; it was part of a package tour of the eastern Commonwealth and concerned with Malaysia's defence problems after British withdrawal.

Such visits to Commonwealth countries will not make an impact; it will not impress on the politicians of the region that India is genuinely interested in South-East Asia. Moreover, the only agreements were about trade and collaboration, and though of considerable interest for export trade and businessmen, of little political interest. Instead of visiting Latin America it would have been more helpful if the Prime Minister had visited the South-East Asian countries. We still have to establish an image in the region, and this should be the first priority for the Government, if we are to have a South-East Asian policy.

(Concluded)

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The Rickshaw Puller

VIMLA AND SATYAPAL DANG

It is quite an appropriate commentary on 21 years of Congress rule that nearly two decades after achievement of independence many in our country, for one reason or another, should feel compelled to take to rickshaw pulling. Worst of course is the rickshaw in which one or more human beings are driven by the rickshaw-driver entirely by human energy. Such rickshaws are found in very large numbers in Calcutta, as also in many towns in the country. Apart from the insult to human dignity involved in this profession, the extremely hard nature of the work coupled with poor nourishment makes T.B. the inevitable fate of rickshaw drivers.

Why should a large number of citizens of free India take to such a profession? What are their problems? To be able to find answers to these and similar other questions we decided to interview a number of rickshaw drivers at random but in such an informal manner as not to make them self-conscious.

During 1967-68, Municipal Committee Amritsar, licensed 4271 rickshaws (as compared with 3597 in 1964-65) and 4614 rickshaw drivers (as compared with 4020 in 1964-65).

We have been able to interview only 35 rickshaw drivers. The number is obviously not large enough to be considered fully representative of rickshaw drivers of Amritsar. Another limitation must also be mentioned. Most of the rickshaw pullers interviewed by us were interviewed in Chheharta, an industrial suburb of Amritsar and in some of those parts of Amritsar in which large sections of popula-

tion consists of the working class. Not many were interviewed inside the walled city. Despite these limitations, however, we think it will be useful to share the results of our interviews with the readers of *Mainstream*.

Out of the 35 rickshaw pullers interviewed, six combined rickshaw plying with some other job. One of these, Mehnga Ram of Haripura, besides plying rickshaw works as a Railway porter for two hours every day attending to two trains—Frontier Mail and Howrah Mail.

Another out of these six, Ishar Singh of Village Gumanpura, plies rickshaw only during night from eight P.M. to eight A.M. During the day, in his own words "I work as a casual labourer whenever I am able to get some work."

Yet another, Bara Singh of Village Wadali Guru has rented a small piece of land in Chheharta and works on it on crop sharing basis. He plies rickshaw from eleven AM or so till seven PM and works on the land before eleven A.M.

The remaining three of the six, are industrial workers who ply rickshaw after full duty in their respective factories for some additional income. They have to do this because their wages are not adequate to make both ends meet.

This is now one of them, Shri Ram Gopal, explained his reasons for taking to rickshaw plying for additional income: "I am a full time worker of India Calico Printing Mills, Chheharta with many years' service to my credit. My present wage including D.A. is only Rs. 90/- per month. After deductions on account of Provi-

dent Fund, Employees State Insurance Scheme, I get cash in-hand only Rs. 72/- or so per month and that too only if I get work regularly. Actually the management has been resorting to frequent lay off. We get 50 per cent of wages during lay off period and nothing when lay off in one year has already exceeded 45 days. So I ply rickshaw for additional income. When I am not laid off, I ply rickshaw for two to three hours a day after duty hours but only in summer. It is not possible to do so in winter. When I am laid off, I ply rickshaw from 10 A.M. to 7 P.M. or so, after being at the factory from 8 A.M. to 10 A.M. as required by the management."

And this is what Shri Som Parkash of Chheharta said on the same subject, "I have been working in Universal Screw Factory, Chheharta for the last 5-6 years. They however treat me as a temporary hand and off and on they turn me out sometimes for some weeks and sometimes for some days. I am paid Rs. 70 per month only. That is not enough for my family to make both ends meet. At my own request, the management has put me permanently in the second shift (4pm to 12-30 in the night) During the day from 8 A.M. to 2 P.M. or so, I ply rickshaw to supplement my income."

Out of the twenty-nine rickshaw pullers who did not do any other work, twenty-two were asked about the reasons which led them to take to this profession. As many as 11 of them were industrial workers before they became rickshaw pullers. One, Madhu Ram, was a worker in the Railway Workshop. When [he] retired on

reaching the age of superannuation, he became entitled to a pension of Rs. 41.50 per month. As this was not enough to make his both ends meet, he took to rickshaw pulling.

The remaining ten were workers in privately owned Mills and factories. They lost their jobs for one reason or another—retrenchment, termination of services by way of victimization for trade union activities, shifting of factory to another town, etc. One, a furanceman, had resigned from his job on his own because he could not bear the heat. Another, Niranjan Singh, a militant union activist, had got himself retrenched because he needed money (which he got by way of retrenchment compensation to pay for the evacuee plot in his occupation to escape eviction from there by the Custodian.

Two of the above 11 persons had taken to rickshaw pulling as a side job for additional income even before they lost their Mill jobs.

Of the remaining 11, two persons old men—64 and 60 years of age—had taken up this profession because they did not want to be dependent upon their earning sons who could hardly meet their own family commitments. Sons of both these men are factory workers. Another took to this profession after his retirement from the Army. Yet another used to work as a casual labourer with Masons and as such had to carry brick loads on his head. He said, "rickshaw pulling is a very hard work but my earlier work was worse." Another used to be a mason before he became rickshaw puller. He left mason's work because "only a mason who has some contact with some contractor can get work regularly." Another was originally a rich peasant's servant and then a cartman. After that he tried to get some fallow (Government) land for tilling but was thrown out. Thereafter he took to rickshaw pulling.

Almost every one of the thirty-five rickshaw pullers interviewed by us was asked his age. The youngest was about 17 years old while the oldest was about 64

years of age. According to Municipal bye-laws only persons in the age group 21-44 are entitled to be licensed as rickshaw drivers. At least 9 out of the 35 interviewed however were above the stipulated age. Obviously they under-stated their ages in their applications and must have greazed some official's palm for clearing the same. One rickshaw driver who was 60 years of age—frankly stated, "Yes, there is a rule that no one is supposed to be given a license for rickshaw driving if he is above 45 years of age. But to be able to earn one's living, one has sometimes to tell a lie."

Not all were asked their castes but majority of those who were asked belonged to scheduled castes.

Obviously there are no fixed working hours for rickshaw pullers. Everyone decides for him self. Actually, their poverty compels them to work many hours a day. Only four or five said that they worked for eight hours a day. The rest worked nine hours or more daily. Quite a few said that they worked for twelve hours every day. The one who worked longest worked from 5-30 A.M. to 7-30 P.M. every day. Yet another, Joginder Lal said, "I ply my rickshaw from late in the evening upto 10 or 11 A.M. the next day. This means more than twelve hours daily. I ply during the night because it is not always easy during the day to get passengers because of the local buses—during the night there are no local buses. I attend to night trains as also cinema shows. During the night it is also easier and less strenuous to ply."

Of the 35 interviewed, 32 were asked if the rickshaws were their own. Thirteen owned their rickshaws while 18 had hired them. Hired charges varied from Re. 1 to Rs. 2.50 per day depending upon whether the rickshaw was in very good condition or otherwise and also for the number of hours for which rickshaw was taken on hire. Certain persons do the business of hiring out of rickshaws to rickshaw pullers. It is a very

new rickshaw even these days costs Rs. 600 only. Generally the same rickshaw is hired out to one person during the day and to another during the night. This however is not always so.

One said that the rickshaw was neither his own nor had been taken on hire. This is how he explained the position: "I have settled to purchase it for Rs. 300 to be paid in instalments at the rate of Rs. 1.50 per day..... Actually the rickshaw is only worth about Rs. 200. So I have to pay Rs. 100 extra because I cannot pay Rs. 200 in cash. This is loot but the bargain suits me also as otherwise I would have to pay hire charges all my life. One can get a new rickshaw also on deferred payment basis by paying Rs. 750 for a rickshaw worth Rs. 600."

Almost all those who took rickshaws on hire wanted to own them but could not manage the necessary finances.

About 50 per cent of those who had their own rickshaws had purchased the same second hand.

Daily and even average earnings of different rickshaw pullers vary considerably—depending upon the number of hours put in and also whether the rickshaw is self-owned or is taken on hire. The job is so hard that every rickshaw puller has to spend some amount on himself every day—by way of extra cups of lassi or other things just to keep himself going. Thus from gross earnings one must deduct rickshaw hire charges (alternatively repair charges) and the amount spent on one-self to keep going to get an idea of net earnings. Generally the whole time rickshaw puller said that they were able to earn Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 or Rs. 4 to Rs. 6 a day. Two said that they were able to earn (gross) Rs. 10 each day. One said that he was able to earn Re. 1 to Rs. 3.

We have noted above that about 50 per cent of the whole-time rickshaw pullers interviewed had taken to this profession after they lost their jobs as industrial workers. Conversely it should also be noted that quite a few were not willing to give up their

present profession for an unskilled job in a factory.

Gopi Chand explained thus "It is a very hard job. It takes away my blood but I am able to earn more than when I was working in Factory."

Teja Singh of Khasa said, "I do not work in a mill because there an unskilled worker is paid only Rs. 2 a day or so. The mills owners have no Dharma."

Same reason was given by some others also. One gave a different reason. He said, "I have got used to it. I just cannot do a factory job. I got one once but gave it up 'after a month.'" Another gave a similar reason, "I prefer my present profession because of the independence that goes with it. I work according to my own sweet will."

Only two out of the thirty five said they had plans to give up this profession. One knew motor driving and was looking for a job as a driver. Another a son of a teacher, had plans to go to Delhi and "try to take to scooter driving if I am able to get a license."

The rickshaw pullers mentioned a number of their problems.

All the driver-owners were bitter about the heavy taxes they have to pay to the Amritsar

Municipality for the rickshaw, Rs. 18 per annum. "While the tax may be justified in case of those who hire out rickshaws. Driver Owners should be exempted"-was the common demand.

High price for tyres was another problem mentioned by the driver-owners. "These days one tyre costs Rs. 15" said Kishan Chand.

Every rickshaw driver has to pay the Amritsar Municipality Rs. 1.85 Paise as fee for driver's license. He has however to pay extra for the photograph. Moreover drivers get the help of "middlemen" and have to pay them for the services rendered. Niranjn Singh explained the problem thus : "Drivers' license fee including medical charges is Rs. 3 or so. But there are middlemen who writes our applications and get us the license. They charge us Rs. four to six in all. We do not mind this because it saves us a lot of time and sometimes even medical examination, though on record it will be always there." Another said that unless municipal officials were paid something, "they harass us."

Niranjn Singh mentioned another problem too. He said, "Besides the Municipal license fee we have to pay

Rs. 2 for being allowed to stand outside the railway station and Rs. 6 to the Zila Parishad if we intend to ply our rickshaws also to areas just outside the Municipal limits."

Quite a few complained that they had been hit hard by the local buses.

Ram Gopal stated, "Before the introduction of the local bus I could usually earned Rs. 4 or 5 for a full day's plying but now I can earn only Rs. 3 at the most and some times even less."

Gopi Chand said, "What I earn now by working upto 7 P.M. I could earn by working upto 4 or 5 P.M. when there were no local buses."

Teja Singh wanted that timings of local buses should be limited and they should not be overloaded.

One rickshaw driver, Piara Singh, however, expressed a view different from the common one. He said "True, there are now many local buses but the number of passengers too seems to be increasing. Many passengers middle-class and well-off people do not like crowded buses and so we get customers and are able to carry on."

Such is the life and problems of a rickshaw puller.

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Floods In West Bengal : 1968

R. B. CHAKRABORTY

THE year 1968 has been a year of abnormal rainfall in West Bengal. The monsoon set much earlier than normal and heavy rains have been, frequent from the beginning which inundated Calcutta, 24-Parganas, Howrah, Hooghly and lower areas in Midnapur. The fields were flooded from local rains in July all over in the districts of Midnapur and 24-Parganas.

Before the farmers could recover from the effects of the July floods, the August floods came bringing disaster to a good part of the Midnapur District and to some parts of Howrah and Hooghly districts.

After this came the North Bengal floods at an unusual time in October which caused a general devastation practically all over the area. This North Bengal Flood has caused severe loss of lives and property in Jalpaiguri and Moynaguri.

There are different reasons for floods in different areas. Alluvial lands are built up by river silt and naturally the levels of these lands are lower than the high flood levels of adjoining streams. In the tidal areas these lands are below the high-tide levels but are usually above the low-tide levels and therefore they may be drained during the ebb tides ; but these lands would require dykes and embankments

to protect them against the high tides entering through the estuaries and tidal creeks. Breaches occur due to the slipping and erosion of the embankments by waves during high winds which usually come in the months, March to May when tides are also high.

These breaches, if small in length can be closed taking advantage of the tides but when breached sections become deeper, it takes considerable time to close them. In the meantime, the ingress of saline water makes the land unfit for cultivation and it remains so for one or two years even after the closure of the breach. It may be mentioned in this connection that since these breaches usually occur during March to May standing crops are not usually involved in the devastation. These difficulties are generally limited to areas under the influence of high tides and high winds as in the Sundarbans.

The type of flood which are the subject matter of discussion are however of a different nature. These latter floods are caused during the monsoon by heavy rains bringing in onrush of water from higher catchments and conditions are often aggravated when simultaneous local heavy rains occur.

While rivers and streams cut their way through valleys and go deeper and deeper, they deposit the cut-away and eroded material on the plains which are really formed by such deposits of eroded silt and sand. Here the river section is maintained more or less by the dominant flood discharge of the stream. Such section cannot naturally accommodate the high floods which come occasionally once in a few years. In

countries where the dominant flood and high flood discharges are not widely different the spilling is only limited ; but in active monsoon belts the high flood discharge is several times more than the dominant flood discharge and under such circumstances spilling is extensive. Also the silt carrying rivers not only raise their beds gradually—thus raising their H.F.L. (High Flood Levels)—but the banks as well by deposition of silt during spilling. The countryside in such cases thus slopes down away from the stream. Under such conditions, once the spilling overtops these high grounds it finds easy passage into the adjoining valleys creating havoc. To guard against these, marginal embankments are constructed by vested interests or by the Government along the banks of the rivers. So long as the floods do not go above the embankments or the embankments are not scoured by attack of the deep channel, the people behind are safe ; but when these embankments are breached by overtopping or for other reasons, the flood waters rush through the same bringing in greater devastation to the local areas than the devastation that would have taken place had the embankments been not there at all. This is due to the fact that in the former case the flood levels are higher and velocity along the line of direct flow through the breach is very high. Also the embankments raise the bed level of the river quickly (due to curtailment of spill areas) thus raising the H.F.L. also quickly.

While in other years the floods have been known to have devastated a part of West Bengal, 1968 has been a year of flood con-

Sri Chakraborty is the Chief Engineer, Irrigation Department, West Bengal Government. This article is based on notes taken during his talk at the Symposium on Water Resources in Eastern India organised by the Indian Association of Geo-hydrologists in Calcutta on October 31.

cerning practically whole of the State of West Bengal.

Not only the monsoon broke much earlier than normal in 1968, there was heavy and frequent rains all over West Bengal (except in North Bengal where contrary to normal conditions, there was lack of rain in the beginning). Fields got flooded and first transplantations were damaged in 24-Parganas, Midnapur, Hooghly and Howrah areas. However, this would not have caused much difficulty as there was still enough time for re-transplantation. After re-transplantation was made, came the heavy August floods which affected mostly Midnapur, Howrah and Hooghly areas and caused difficulty in some parts of 24-Parganas. In the 24-Parganas the water was from the local rainfall and was therefore limited, the difficulties being in the low pockets which were gradually drained and much of the difficulties were removed quickly. The difficulties in Midnapur, Howrah and Hooghly areas however continued. This was due not only to the heavy local rainfall but added to it were the heavy discharges from the higher catchments.

Kangsabati Valley : In Midnapur the Kangsabati river was in very high floods and the flood level at Kharagpur exceeded all its past records. The high water over-flooded and breached the O.T. Road and entered Debra area which was inundated. However, the breach was closed within a short time and the re-transplantation was made. It is understood this area is likely to get good crop on account of the silt deposited by the flood itself. What happened in Debra is the typical flood by flooding rivers described already. The water enters but goes away quickly after the floods are over. The silt deposited during the heavy flood is often beneficial (except where sand is deposited) to maintain fertility of the land, although during the few days of the flood it causes extreme difficulties.

Lower Kangsabati Valley : From

the very beginning there was demand from lower valley areas that the water should not be released from the Kangsabati reservoir (partly constructed), even though the reservoir is not yet sufficiently large to effect appreciable flood moderation. In fact, the catchment area now controlled by the present reservoir is only one-seventh of the total catchment of the river. Thus most of the July flood water was retained in the reservoir for the interest of the transplanted crops. Before the store water could be released to some extent came the August floods. Even so the August flood inflow was substantially reduced at the reservoir but the heavy rains in the uncontrolled catchment (which is about six-seventh of the total catchment) resulted in a high discharge for the lower valley. Added to it was the discharge pushed by the Silai river which also could not be drained quickly on account of Silai bed having gone up due to construction of cross bunds indiscriminately. The Rupnarayan river (above Kolaghat) has itself deteriorated for various reasons—both human interference and natural causes. One of the channels of the Kangsabati is Palaspai Khal, which has deteriorated due to construction of cross bunds over the years. The only channel action is the Kalmijal Khal which swelled up during the floods and breached the Dusasanpur Circuit embankment causing inundation in the protected area. Even after the close of the breach there was difficulty of drainage on account of high levels in the draining channels caused by continued rainfall.

Kalighat Valley : Here the Subarnarekha was in high flood and it spilled over the high watershed line on the left and the water spilled into the Kaliaghai Valley. The Kaliaghai has a small section and can hardly accommodate the run off from its own catchment area. Accordingly, it was too much for the stream to accommodate the heavy spilling from Subarnarekha in addition to the local run-off. Thus vast areas were devastated,

embankments were disrupted and not only crops were totally destroyed but there was extreme difficulty in the villages which were under several feet of water. In this case the difficulties continued for months together as the water would not drain quickly on account of the limited capacity of Kaliaghai channel and other drainage channels. The Kaliaghai has been encroached from the sides giving it only a narrow section. The deterioration has further been aggravated by the rise of the bed by about 10 feet or so in a good length of the channel on account of construction of multiple cross bunds for dry weather agricultural operation. Thus, it will be seen that in this case the difficulty was aggravated and continued over a long time due to the holding up of the drainage caused by human interference in their greed for growing more food. Apart from this, numerous local embankments, villages, roads etc. obstructed the flow of the drainage into the estuary. Also many of the outfall channels have been encroached and or silted up by cross bunds, obstruction etc.

Damodar Valleys : This consists of two parts ; one on the left of Damodar-Ampta channel, and the other on the right of the said channel. The protected areas on the left have certain amount of difficulty on account of absence of drainage outfall channels of sufficient capacity. The Saraswati has been practically encroached fully for agricultural and other purposes. The Kunti-Cut constructed for this purpose is inadequate and its size is to be doubled at least. (The problem here is difficult as the Kunti-Cut area is heavily built up.) However, condition of the upper protected areas has not been so acute as in the other areas mentioned above. The real difficulty in the protected area was caused in the lower part where water from the high areas of Hooghly District comes and stagnates on the lower areas in Howrah District. The drainage channels in this latter area cannot accommodate all the up land discharge at

times of heavy rains. The drainage channels having outfall into the Damodar (Amta Channel) cannot discharge on account of the deterioration of the Damodar itself caused mainly by human interference and also by natural reasons. Thus the whole of Kedula-Amta area remained waterlogged for a long time after heavy rains. The encroachment in the river system and putting up of cross bunds no doubt increases the food crops grown, but the miseries of the people in flood years increases and often become intolerable.

While the Damodar Valley reservoirs can bring down the highest known floods to about two and a half lakh cusecs, the Mundeswari (the main branch of the Damodar) has a bankful capacity of no more than 70,000 cusecs. Under the circumstances, the unprotected areas are flooded whenever the discharge is more than 70,000 cusecs. While this was the position a few years back, the river channel has further deteriorated lately on account of construction of temporary bridge, encroachments etc. In 1968 even a discharge of 40,000 cusecs from the barrage at Durgapur created difficulty in the lower areas.

North Bengal : While these were the difficulties on southern parts of the State in the first half of the flood season, there came the news of the North Bengal floods. Here the Teesta and other rivers caused havoc and a very large part of North Bengal area was devastated. The Railway (Jalpaiguri) Bridge had a capacity of five lakh cusecs while a discharge of about seven lakh cusecs passed during the floods. At the Anderson Bridge, the rise of water level was over 60 feet above the highest flood level. At the Coronation Bridge this was 27 feet higher than the highest flood level, and at Sevoke Railway Bridge this was 18 feet above the H.F.L. The embankments were spaced no less than 12,000 ft. apart at Jalpaiguri which would need only a rise of about two feet above the high flood level (corresponding to five

lakh cusecs) to pass 700,000 cusecs if the bridges were not there, but with the restricted openings in the Bridges (Railway and Road Bridges at Jalpaiguri) the water level swelled up and went quite a few feet over the embankment in a considerable length and breached the same on both banks. On the right bank there were numerous breaches. The flowing waters overtopped and breached the high Railway line and flooded the town of Jalpaiguri on right bank and Domohani-Maynaguri on the left bank in the early hours of the morning of October 5. There was great difficulty and loss of life and extensive loss of property.

Earthen embankments, how strong ever, cannot take any appreciable over-flow. In fact, even solid concrete armoured guide bunds of the Railway bridge gave in within a short time when the over-flow took place. It will thus be seen that here again it was human interference that aggravated the flood conditions. Before the embankments were not there, the people generally used to build their houses high on wooden props so that flood flow might not be allowed to create much difficulty and would flow away quickly. After the embankments were constructed, the people felt complacent, and the real difficulty came from this complacency. Many of the houses lately constructed have low and solid plinths. The collapse of almost all the compound walls in the town indicated that these had caused severe obstructions to the flow and under such circumstances it is no wonder that water levels had been very high in the town.

So far as Teesta and some other rivers of North Bengal are concerned, estimates of high floods from records of a few years is deceptive. Even estimates from rainfall and run-off may not give a very correct indication. Under heavy rainfall condition, heavy land slips occur as has happened during 1968. These might cause temporary detentions of flow here and there, which are released in a rush once the obstructions give way. Records indicate that towards the evening of October 4, 1968 there was a steadiness in the water level at Domohani and even there was a fall in flood level there by about mid-night of October 4. This might have been due to temporary detention stated above. The water suddenly rose between 1 A.M. and 2 A.M. on October 5 and this might have been due to such obstructions giving way suddenly. Later investigation indicates that there are still remnants of such obstructions here. There are signs of heavy blocking downstream of Teesta Bazar where water level is not coming down to anywhere near the expected levels (even when the discharge has dwindled down considerably) long after the floods are over. Unlike breaches in other embankments (like Kosi) the Teesta embankments did not breach till the embankments were over-topped. It has been proposed to raise the Teesta embankments accordingly but here again some difficulties will have to be faced. Unless the Railway Lines are raised the raising of embankments alone will not serve the purpose. Solution will therefore need a thorough investigation of the causes of the flood and co-ordinated plan of action.

CORRECTION

Due to oversight the name of the author of 'The Values Nehru Symbolised' (MAINSTREAM, November 16, 1968) was mis-spelled.

*It should read CHANDRAJEET YADAVA.
The error is regretted.*

—Editor

Break-up of Naga Underground

KRANTI SEN

THE series of dramatic developments in Nagaland—the kidnapping of three pro-Phizo rebel leaders by the breakaway Sema faction, the dissolution of the “Federal Government” and its rival “Army Government”, the birth of a new party, the Council of Naga People, headed by deposed “Prime Minister” Kughato Sukhai, the decision of the new party not to allow Chinese interference in Naga affairs and to strive for a peaceful political solution of the Naga problem—reveal the extent of demoralisation and disintegration in the underground camp.

The process of disintegration started when Kaito Sema, the former “Defence Minister” of the so-called “Federal Government”, broke away from his group of Sema followers and set up what he called the “Army Government”. Kaito, together with his brother Kughato, became increasingly hostile to the “hostiles” and favoured a political settlement with the Union Government, presumably—though he was never explicit on the point—within the framework of the Indian Constitution. He was also vehemently opposed to any involvement with China.

There were several clashes between his group and the Phizoites. Once he raided an underground den and carried away large quantities of arms and ammunition. The Phizoites, mostly Angamis, found their political authority being challenged and subverted, while militarily the desertion of the Semas was a great loss to them. (Semas constituted the bulk of the rebel army which was organised and directed personally by Kaito.) Thus, Kaito posed a

potential threat to the “Federal Government” and its self-exiled leader Phizo. The rebels were out to do away with Kaito. After several abortive attempts on his life, they succeeded. Kaito was murdered at Kohima on August 3 this year.

Observers of the Naga scene feared reprisals by Kaito’s men. It was known at Kohima at the time that Kughato had given an ultimatum to the underground leaders to hand over Kaito’s assassin. Non-compliance in such cases usually leads to inter-tribal feuds. Since the rebels were in no mood to oblige, the danger of a violent Sema-Angami feud seemed very real. However, weeks and months passed, but the Semas did not try to avenge the death of their leader.

Mature Move

Recent events, however, show that far from being the end, the assassination marked a turning point in underground politics. With remarkable political maturity, the Semas resisted the temptation to wreak personal vengeance for the murder and decided to retaliate politically. They have now scored a decisive victory and wrested the initiative from the Phizo group, most of whom are Angamis.

There are certain interesting facets to the episode. First, it is surprising that two top rebel leaders, “President” Mhiasi and Z. Ramyo could be kidnapped by the Semas in broad daylight without any resistance and that from near Kohima, which is an Angami area. It may be recalled that earlier this year, “General” Zeheto, acting “Commander-in-

Chief” of the rebel army, was similarly “kidnapped” by Kaito, but later it transpired that Zeheto had defected to the Kaito group and the kidnapping story was a camouflage to deceive the rebels.

Secondly, assuming that Mhiasi and Ramyo have genuinely changed their views on Naga sovereignty and are prepared to strive for and accept a political settlement, it is doubtful if Phizo and his other lieutenants like Imkongmeren and “General” Mouw (both in China) will get reconciled to the dissolution of their government and give up the struggle for secession. If not, will they venture to resume hostilities once they manage to sneak back to India with arms and the group of young Nagas now being trained in China.

It is significant that so far Phizo has not opened his mouth on the new situation. The reaction of the rebel rank and file to the *volte face* of the two leaders has also to be ascertained. Much depends on whether or not Mhiasi and Ramyo, wielding great influence on the rebel Nagas, can carry the majority with them. If their new move does not find support from the majority or is supported by only a section a shrunken and weakened “Federal Government” will still continue to exist, though they will lose much of their mischief-making potentiality.

It is to be seen whether Phizo remains a passive spectator or takes to remote-control from London. Already he has lost much of his former halo. If he fails to keep together his remaining lieutenants he will cease to influence Naga politics altogether.

Indications are that the new party will strengthen the roots of democracy in the State. State Government sources believe it will participate in the general elections to be held in February next year. The very logic of events demands this. Opting for a political settlement with the Government of India implies acceptance of the fact that Nagaland is part of India. It is precisely this point that prevented the underground from taking part in elections. Their contention was that if they participated in the elections they would, by implication, be accepting the Indian Constitution and thus denying the *raison d'être* of their party—the Naga National Council.

New Party's Role

There are certain other factors which accentuated the rift within the underground. The first is the coming back of Kevichusa to Naga politics. A former colleague of Phizo and one of the founders of the NNC, Kevichusa is held in great esteem. In the first elections in 1964, his democratic Party won 13 seats out of 18 contested. Later he dissolved his party in the hope that it would help direct talks between the rebels and the Centre. Since then he had been leading a sort of retired life.

In July this year he announced the launching of a new party—the United Front of Nagaland. He said the party would contest all the seats in the forthcoming elections. He also indicated that some prominent underground leaders would join his party and fight the elections as UFN candidates. The hard core of the rebels felt shaky at the prospect of an opposition party contesting the ruling NNO since it would falsify their propaganda that only "India's stooges" were party to the elections. It would also lower their prestige because they—claiming to be the sole representatives of the Naga people—were boycotting the elections and urging the people not to vote.

Secondly, the systematic campaign by the Church leaders during the last few months against

the rebels' collusion with China was making an impact on the people. The Church leaders had organised two conferences of selected Naga leaders with a view to finding a peaceful solution. Very recently, a Naga delegation went to Delhi and urged the Government to resume negotiations with the underground. But it was told that there could be no talks unless the secessionist slogan was given up. The stiff attitude of New Delhi made it clear to the rebels that they could not indefinitely go on talking and at the same time bring arms from abroad and send their young men to Pakistan or China for training in guerilla war.

Thirdly, many in the rebel camp, especially those in the army, are feeling tired. They do not want to be thrown into another round of fighting with the security forces with predictable results.

Lastly, the role played by a key figure in the State Cabinet Hokishe Sema, Finance Minister helped to ease matters. With great skill and self-confidence he has been conducting a silent but relentless diplomatic war against the underground, trying to isolate the pro-Phizo hard core and build up opinion against their policy of seeking Chinese help. It is he who brought about Kaito's rupture with the underground and persuaded him to take a positive stand on the Naga problem. His efforts seem to be yielding results.

Whatever Phizo and his comrades may do, they can never regain the moral, political and military power they once wielded

over the Naga masses. They have ceased to be the sole spokesmen of the Naga people. Their pro-China policy has done them more harm than good. The breaking away of the Semas and the disillusionment spreading in their army reduce their trouble-making capacity.

Prospects of Peace

Prospects of stable peace are far brighter today than at any time in the past. If the new party joins the election battle, as it is expected to, for the first time the Nagas will get the opportunity to elect men of their choice and the Government will be a truly representative one.

The Naga Underground as a whole may not hold out the olive branch right now, but they cannot venture to start a new offensive either. Kughato and those who have joined him are politically experienced people. They are expected to be flexible and open-minded. Once it is accepted by all concerned that the hopes and aspirations of the Nagas can be best fulfilled by their remaining within India, the Naga problem will change its character. It will not then be a question of secession or sovereignty, but of deciding on the extent of autonomy they must enjoy in order to preserve their culture and grow according to their genius. Given mutual understanding and goodwill, that should not be too difficult a task. In any case, current developments indicate a change in underground thinking—a change for the better.

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No Magic or Miracles In Nixon

I. F. STONE

IN one respect the election campaign of 1968 was standard. In most elections the rival candidates try to sound as much alike as possible. This is true even of campaigns which proved turning points in American history. No one could have been more equivocal on slavery than Lincoln. FDR in the 1932 campaign sounded like Herbert Hoover. The voice of the people was no more blurred in 1968 than usual. To get a majority under most circumstances in a big country with a wide range of opinion, it is necessary to get down to a pretty weak and ambiguous common denominator. The lack of a clear choice on Vietnam reflected the fact that both parties, like the country, were agreed in a desire to get it over with, but divided as to whether the best means was an all-out military effort or negotiation. The close vote reflected the toss-up character of the decision, and the campaign ended with all three candidates agreed on pursuing negotiations for an "honorable peace", whatever that means.

For a Tougher Racial Policy

The other decision ratified by the election is not so pleasant. If you add the Nixon vote to the Wallace vote to Humphery's metooism on law and order, you are forced to conclude that the white majority is for tougher action to deal with black unrest, though the country is still far from a new irreconcilable conflict. Except in the deep South, Wallace proved to be a fringe phenomena. On the other side the heavy black vote for Humphery shows that the power of the black nationalists and extremists has been even more exaggerated than that of

the Wallaceites. It is clear that the overwhelming majority of the blacks are ready to participate in normal politics if it offers any meaningful choice at all. Meaningful choices often turn out to be lesser evils, and at the last moment to blacks, as to many disaffected white radicals, Humphery looked like a lesser evil than Nixon and Agnew. Cleaver and Gregory picked up only a handful of black votes. This Humphery vote means that there is still time and room for racial reconciliation.

We don't think Nixon is the man who can bring it about. Let me put the problem in large terms. What the French call "immobilism" is characteristic of human society everywhere, irrespective of the social forms. Most rulers of human societies find themselves hemmed in by the circumstances under which they took power. Little changes. There isn't much elbow room in Washington or Moscow, for example, without radical measures. But radical measures require a willingness to take risk. Khrushchev showed it when he made his secret speech on Stalin, Pope John when he transformed the Roman Catholic Church, de Gaulle when he got out of Algeria. Each had the courage and the insight for fresh directions. This is what America needs to deal with the twin problems of the urban and racial crises at home, and with our over-extension abroad. Nixon hasn't got what it takes.

The first obstacle is the strategy which brought him to power. His base is the South, the small towns and the comfortable. This does not necessarily rule out radical measures. De Gaulle was swept into power by the very forces, military and colonialist, he was soon to

"betray" by his magnanimity in Algeria. Khrushchev's constituency was a Communist party hierarchy matched in its unimaginative stuffiness only by the College of Cardinals which elected John. But those who looked closely at de Gaulle's past and John's, if not Khrushchev's, could see that they were innovators. There is no sign of that quality in Nixon.

Nixon is the first real Republican to win the Presidency since 1924 when Coolidge was elected. People have forgotten that Hoover, like Eisenhower, had been so apolitical that he was once suggested for the Democratic nomination in 1920. With Nixon we are back to the genuine article. He is of the same bland, banal and Babbitty breed as Coolidge and Harding. Like them he symbolizes the desire of the well-to-do and of small-town America for "normalcy", for an end to emergency and experiment, for a Canute that will somehow hold back the tides of change. Like Coolidge and Harding, he is inescapably insipid, the type that vice presidents of banks regard as solid fellows. That kind of leadership ruined the Republican party before and will do so again.

Welfare System For The Rich

There is no cheap way out. The first choice is between urban-racial requirements and the upper class welfare system which is the military-industrial complex and aerospace. This is the gravy train of the suburbs, the technicians and the new millionaires of Texas and California whose gilt-edged old age pensions depend on militarism and the space race. These are the richest and easiest sources of the contributions a Presidential campaign requires; Kennedy tapped them in 1960 with the "missile gap" nonsense,

This is from the well-known Washington Journal, I.F. Stone's Weekly, (November 18, 1968.)

LOST OF U.S. AIR WAR AGAINST NORTH VIETNAM

Now that the bombing of North Vietnam has ended, at least temporarily, we phoned the Pentagon press office for some figures on what it all cost. The Pentagon tries to hide this by lumping aerial figures for both Vietnams. The figure which startled us most was for the total bomb tonnages dropped on Vietnam, North and South, up until the end of October. This was given as 2,948,057 tons. When we asked for comparative figures, we were told that the total tonnage dropped in World War II was 2,057,244, the grand total for both the European and Asian theatres. So we dropped almost 50 per cent more bombs on Vietnam than on all Eurasia and the Pacific. The total dropped on Korea, North, and South, in the Korean War was 635,000. We have dropped five times as much on Vietnam. We asked the Pentagon how to figure the cost and were told about 50 cents a pound. This means the bombs alone cost about \$3 billion.

When we asked whether most of this was dropped on North Vietnam, we were told only about a fifth was dropped on the North. So that would run to \$600,000,000.

As of Oct. 29, we had lost 914 fixed wing planes and 10 helicopters over the North. (The combat losses in the South during the same period was 315 fixed wing planes and 906 helicopters.) An attack or fighter plane averages about \$2 million, a helicopter about \$250,000. So you can add another \$2 billion for planes and helicopters lost in combat over the North. That brings the total to \$2,600,000,000 for the bombing of the North.

But that is not the whole story of plane losses. There is another category of air losses not due to ground-to-air or air to air fire. This includes planes hit by mortar fire, damaged in accidents, or lost in Vietnam through other causes. The grand total of these for both Vietnams is 1,198 fixed wing and 1,214 helicopters. These may be worth roughly another \$2 billion for the fixed wing and another \$300 million for the helicopters. If half of this is allocated to the air war against the North, it would bring the total cost of the attacks on the North to \$3,750,000,000.

To this must be added the cost of pilots lost. The Pentagon has given out a figure of "more than" 450 pilots killed or missing in the air war over the North. The mean cost of training a modern combat pilot is \$450,000. That would add another \$202 million to the cost bringing the total up to almost \$4 billion. Never was more money blown away in a more wicked cause.

—From *I.F. Stones Weekly*, November 18, 1968.

Nixon has done so again with a "security gap", a "research gap" and a "submarine gap," all equally nonsensical. Nixon knows it, as Kennedy knew it, but that won't keep Nixon from stepping up the arms race just as Kennedy did. The key point to watch is what he does about the anti-ballistic missile; only a programme of this size can support the complex and aerospace in the style to which they have become accustomed. It is hard to see Nixon breaking loose from his constituency on that one. So the course is set for a lot of nonsense about letting free enterprise solve the problems of the ghetto. He will try to win over a thin upper strata of Negro leadership, but without alienating his base. It is the unexpected outbreak which is to be feared; then we are likely to see resort to force and a revival of witch-hunting-old-Nixon style. Both will intensify racial antagonism and crisis.

This is the danger on which a new opposition should focus. Humphrey's flabby joint post-election appeal with Nixon against "divisiveness" shows that he is as incapable of leading it now as he was before the election. If there is no "divisiveness" there is no two-party system and there is no real choice again. To deny choice is to provoke and extend the really dangerous divisiveness of alienation among the youth and the blacks. A real opposition is necessary if orderly change is to be possible. But Humphrey in

the campaign showed himself constitutionally incapable of leading such opposition. To follow him will only ensure another defeat. Only McCarthy began to open up the real issues. If he could develop a rapport with black aspiration, he could lead an effective opposition, inside or outside the party, but preferably within it. There is no substitute for that coalition the Democratic party represents. To capture, broaden and educate it seems to me essential if the country's problems are to be solved peacefully.

McCarthy is right when he says the narrow returns show that Humphrey might have beaten Nixon if the bombing halt had come earlier. But there is reason to doubt that Johnson wanted a Humphrey victory. A Humphrey defeat may have suited his vanity and calculations. Johnson worked well with Eisenhower in the 50s, and may hope to work as closely with Nixon. The extraordinary pact reached between them at their first White House conference after the election must encourage the ambitions Johnson may nurture to be an elder statesman of the bipartisan Establishment. The Nixon-Johnson agreement may seem at the moment to safeguard the Paris talks from upset by Thieu. But when two such tricky operators agree, the pro-peace forces had best be on guard.

Most Intricate Con Game

There has rarely been such an opaque con game as the Paris

talks, and it is not surprising that all sides are suspicious. Hanoi paid an unexpected price. It did what it said it would never do, submit to conditions for a bombing halt. It agreed to sit down at the peace table with the Saigon government. "It is absolutely out of the question," Wilfred Burchett told Tokyo *Shimbun* in a Phnom Penh interview Oct. 30 on his return from Hanoi, "that North Vietnam and the NLF would talk at conference with representatives of the present Saigon regimes." To agree to sit down with the "puppets" as Hanoi has done and to scale down the fighting, must seem to the NLF a repetition of 1954 when Hanoi bought its independence at the expense of the South.

The lull around the DMZ has made it possible for the US First Cavalry to be moved southward into the Mekong Delta for "pacification" operation. "We are not taking any inhibitions on our own military operations in South Vietnam," Walt Rostow said on ABC *Issues and Answers* Nov. 10, specifying that we had not agreed to a case-fire and that US and ARVN forces were "moving out into the country side; pacification is accelerating." While US bombing of the countryside is stepped up, the NLF is expected to give up the bombardment of the provincial towns and outposts from which the "pacification" forces operate.

It is enough to make one wonder whether those "certain outstanding matters" between the

on referred after his White House visit might possibly include an agreement to let the Russians finally "pacify" the Czechs while they let us "pacify" South Vietnam in the Korean-style peace Johnson has always wanted.

In this murky game Thieu is as fearful of a sell-out by Johnson as the NLF may be of a sell-out by Moscow. Johnson's troubles with the South Vietnamese regime recalls Eisenhower's with the South Koreans. The peace talks on Korea were dragged out for two years because the South Korean regime, with encouragement from the US military, kept upsetting the apple-cart. Syngman Rhee, like Thieu, didn't want the war to end until we had reconquered the North for him, and he exacted concessions which still

years after the case-fire, with no peace treaty in sight. The Rhee dictatorship repressed all those who wanted a peaceful settlement, as the Thieu dictatorship does today.

Newspapers Shut Down

In Saigon we locked ourselves in by rigging elections which give die-hard Catholic refugees from the North control of an unrepresentative legislature while majority Buddhist and pro-peace elements are gagged. In the last few days no less than ten Saigon papers have been shut down or suspended for pro-peace views while Truong Dinh Dzu, the peace candidate who came in second in the presidential elections, has been taken from his Saigon prison to a not-

that he might escape and become the leader of a compromise regime. Hundreds of Buddhists are in prison for advocacy of peace, and only the die-hards are allowed to speak. Thieu obviously feels so weak that he thinks even sitting down at the same table in Paris with the NLF may fatally undermine his regime at home. He fears his Popular Forces in this unpopular war may begin to melt away.

The No. 1 business of a new opposition must still be to watch these tricky and precarious peace talks. Even if they don't break up, they may still leave US troops bogged down indefinitely as in Korea, with the danger of another major war in the Asian quicksands.

Gandhi : Truth and the Centenary

ATULANANDA CHAKRABARTI

A Year Long Worldwide Gandhi Centenary began on October 2, 1968. India since 1920 has been dominated by the personality of Gandhi and abroad he is regarded as a most lovable world-man. All this goes well with a huge homage to Gandhi on his hundredth birthday.

Yet disquieting questions crop up. Is the pageant a mark of our love for Gandhi or a love of a big show in the name of Gandhi? Couldn't it be as well an atonement for our neglect of Gandhi in his last years or our attempt at a demonstrative denial of our having given up Gandhi?

As early as on October 25, 1949, a famous biographer of Gandhi wrote to me: "Some day, when I understand better, I shall write something on Gandhi for publication. Meanwhile what will you all do in India? ... I think Gandhism would be the answer, but where is Gandhi in India?"

Since the World War II Gandhi began to feel un-

wanted. His principal disciples shoved him aside gently. They withdrew Congress Governments from the Provinces in protest against involving India in Britain's War without her consent. But were presently clamouring to be put back in power in provinces in return for active aid in the War. At the Working Committee meeting on September 14, 1939 Pandit Nehru drafted the resolution which stated that India would "gladly associate herself" with England in her War efforts. At this cancellation of non-violence, Gandhi commented: "I was sorry to find myself alone." Again on June 21, 1940, the Working Committee met at Wardha and put it on record that "they are unable to go to the full length with Gandhiji" in respect of non-violence, and "therefore, they absolve him from all responsibility of the programme" which they would now take up. This was the beginning of the end of Gandhi's command.

On June 29 Lord Linlithgow

gave Gandhi an audience, having discerned that "the old man is the biggest thing yet." Mark the word 'yet'. The Viceroy hoped to win over the Working Committee with an offer of a broader share in the India Government. The Working Committee caught the bait and met in Delhi on July 3. The resolution was drafted by Rajaji and he won over Sardar Patel to it. Only the Frontier Gandhi remained loyal to Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji in a published note observed that Rajagopalachari "thinks that I suffer from obsession owing to too much brooding on non-violence. He almost thinks that my vision is blurred. It was no use returning the compliment though half-joking I did". (In the *Statesman* October 1, 1967, Rajaji wrote a devout piece on Gandhi's spiritual insight.) The Congress move to shove Gandhi in the background and settle with the British Raj is in tragic contrast with an earlier feeling. Nehru wrote in his *Autobiography*

the Working Committee and outside, the bonds that tied us to Gandhiji were such that even failure with him seemed preferable to the winning of some temporary advantage without him."

There was a temporary reunion of Gandhi and the Working Committee, when—thrice disappointed, last by Cripps—they appeared to give up hope of achieving Independence by negotiation and embark upon a mass movement. They re-called Gandhi to lead it. He readily came out from his retirement with a programme which at once stirred the country and promised to be no less dramatic and effective than his Dandi march.

But the spectacular movement was nipped off by arrests of Gandhi and other prominent Congress leaders before the promised programme could be staged. In effect, the 'Quit India' resolution for rebellion which had started with a bang gradually petered out due to lack of effective leadership. In historical sequence, 'Quit India' was the last resounding echo of the lofty rhymes to which Gandhi tuned his speech at the Plenary Session of the Round Table Conference.

Unveiling the Gandhi statue in London on May 17 Prime Minister Harold Wilson observed that Gandhi felt distressed over the Round Table Conference. Indeed, Gandhi's speech at the Plenary Session was an impulsive challenge to the British Raj. He claimed that the Congress represented the spirit of rebellion. He was aware, he said, that the word rebellion was not to be "whispered" in a Conference that was solemnly wishful of achieving "India's liberty through negotiation". He added: "But the Congress does not hold quite that view. The Congress has an alternative which is unpleasant to you."

By an irony of fate, as Gandhi's 'Quit India' collapsed the Congress chose to shelve any 'unpleasant alternative' and resorted to 'negotiation' as the one and only way to transfer of

substance of Independence. Indian struggle was punctuated by civil wars; it fought not a war of Independence. And Gandhi's cleavage with his followers occurred over this negotiated Independence. He was heard saying at the Prayer meeting of September 28, 1947, that his voice had lost "the potency which it had before the talks on Independence began."

Wavell initiated the talk and Mountbatten neatly finished it. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali made the pungent remark: "It was a matter of shame that the Congress, putting aside the Quit India resolution came to the feet of Lord Wavell."

Mountbatten, like Linlithgow, liked talking to Gandhi, as a study, probably, of the process how the master's authority over his disciples was waning away. But one thing was known to them—that Gandhi in the course of his decline had no fall.

However, at the sixth meeting with Mountbatten, Gandhi frankly informed him that his own plan was not acceptable to the Congress and he was personally handing over all future negotiations to the Working Committee. The Working Committee was relieved, when Gandhi offered to quit Congress. "What can I do? : was the stifled cry of powerless Gandhi. However we must accept the profound sincerity of the Centenary celebrations, now being put up by his party!

Nehru said in his broadcast on Independence in a vein of euphemism: "Gandhiji is fortunately with us to guide and inspire." Like and wounded giant Gandhi himself felt: "I am groping today.....Is there something wrong with me or are things really going wrong?"

It was after Independence that Gandhi confessed what his non-violence was like. Many painful incidents may be quoted. But the one that he confided in his Prayer meeting of December 24, 1947, is adequate. He said that the world thought that India had won her Independence through non-violence, and, if it was so, it was

he wished that it was really so! But he had already declared that it was not. But, without a doubt, the air will be rent with centenary preachings and proclamation that non-violence did the miracle.

Likewise a hundred quotations may be cited to disclose Gandhi's sorrows over the unkindness of his followers. He was not only not heard but snubbed. The disappointed, discarded, defeated Gandhi wrote the mournful message: "It is said that my speeches now-a-days are depressing. Some even suggest that I should not speak at all..... I hope that I never speak for the sake of speaking. I speak because I feel that I have something to say to the people.....Am I to give up all hope of their ever listening to me? I cannot do that whilst there is breath in me." (14.7.47)

If the light is switched from the public to the leaders, the light is not less lurid: "I should not be least surprised if in spite of all the homage that the national leaders pay to me, they are one day to say: We have had enough of this old man. Why does he not leave us alone?" (Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, p. 686.)

The grand centenary begins on Gandhi's 99th birthday and ends on the 100th. Meanwhile let us listen to and ponder over what Gandhi himself said on his last birthday:

"Where do the congratulations come in? Will it not be more appropriate to say condolence? There is nothing but anguish in my heart. Time was, when whatever I said, the masses followed. Today mine is a lone voice. I have lost all desire to live long, let alone 125 years". (Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, Vol. VIII, p. 172.)

The only comment on the splendour of this centenary can be made in the words of Gandhi himself. The Prayer congregation on August 11, 1947, heard Gandhi saying: "I fear, no one of our leaders, either at the top or at the bottom, is free from hypocrisy." Gandhi had the last word.

Power Satyagraha And Communism

MOHIT SEN

It is a fashionable exercise nowadays to reduce the significance of Gandhiji by cutting him down to the image of an imminent Indian liberal democrat, a sort of eccentric wag whose liberalism was central and whose eccentricity was only a matter of adapting liberal values to the primordial backwardness of the Indian mind. The trick is usually done by cutting passages from the writings and speeches of the Mahatma where he inveighs against Bolshevism and sharply contrasts his ideals and methods to those of Lenin. The facile conclusion is, then drawn that Gandhiji stood for "democracy" against Communist "totalitarianism" & innate attachment to "violence".

A grosser misrepresentation could scarcely be imagined. And let it be added that this misrepresentation owes part of its success to the failure of many Marxist thinkers in India as well as abroad to properly assess the phenomenon that is Gandhiji. There have been violent oscillations in many Marxist circles between an attitude of ridicule (Saklatvala's famous letter is not the only case in point) or of artificial reverence (P.C. Joshi's letter to the "Nation's Father" is, again, not the only conspicuous example). Both these seemingly diametrically opposed views unite on the central point of wanting to wish away the phenomenon of Gandhiji instead of critically analysing it.

There is no question of denying the fact that Gandhiji was bitterly opposed to Bolshevism and Marxism and that he regarded it as his aim to be able to present an alternative to this doctrine and mode of action. He makes this very clear at the very outset of his active work in India.

On March 30, 1919 he categorically states "some friends have argued, 'your satyagraha movement only accentuates the fear we have of the onrush of Bolshevism'".

The fact, however, is that if anything can possibly

prevent this calamity descending upon our country it is satyagraha. Bolshevism is the necessary result of modern materialistic civilisation. Its insensate worship of matter has given rise to a school which has been brought up to look upon material advancement as the goal and which has lost all touch with the finer things of life. Self-indulgence is the Bolshevik creed, self-restraint the satyagraha creed. If I can but induce the nation to accept satyagraha if only as a predominant factor in life, we need have no fear of the Bolshevik propaganda".

Again in June 1919 he emphatically declares "But in India against all odds, the high principles of our hoary civilisation have still a strong hold on the masses; and if the rapidly widespread growth of Bolshevism which is attacking one nation after another in Europe was to be successfully arrested in India and even any possibility of its finding a congenial soil safeguarded against, it was necessary that the people of India should be reminded of the legacy of their civilisation and culture comprised in the one word 'satyagraha'.

In all of the three decades of the intense activity and dramatic changes which followed these utterances, Gandhiji never wavered with regard to this basic assessment of Bolshevism and Communism. In some later statement he would refer to the "sacrifice" of "master spirits like Lenin". He would visit the Communists at the Meerut jail and tell them that in the next round of national struggle there would be no withdrawal even if incidents like Chauri Chaura were repeated. In his last period of imprisonment and shortly afterwards he would study the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin and in his correspondence with P.C. Joshi he would admit the startling worth of so many Communists whom he personally knew. But the basic fixation and a fundamentalist kind of opposition remained.

And this in a man who did not hesitate to devote consistency as the "hobgoblin of little minds" and who could write movingly about Truth thus: If it is possible for the human tongue to give the fullest

This paper was presented at the Seminar on Gandhi: Theory and Practice, held at the Indian Institute of Advance Study, Simla in October, 1968.

description of God, I have come to the conclusion that, for myself, God is Truth.

"But two years ago, I went a step further and said that Truth is God. You will see the fine distinction between the two statements, viz., God is Truth and Truth is God. And I came to that conclusion after a continuous and relentless search after Truth, which began nearly fifty years ago.....I never found a double meaning in connection with Truth, and not even atheists had demurred to the necessity or power of Truth. But, in their passion for discovering Truth, the atheists have not hesitated to deny the very existence of God—from their own point of view rightly. And it was because of this reasoning that I saw that, rather than say that 'God is Truth, I should say that 'Truth is God.'"

Mahatma and Non-Violence

It was not only with regard to the means to be adopted in the struggle against British imperialism that Gandhiji opposed the Communists. As a matter of fact on the question of the use of violence Gandhiji was not absolutely consistent. He consented in 1941 to the Congress leadership declaring that in the struggle against the Japanese, a National Government would not be averse to the use of arms. Earlier he had, most paradoxically, refused to approve of the action of the Garhwal Regiment to fire against non-violent demonstrators in Peshawar, publicly declaring that an army needed discipline and that in a free India a disciplined army and police force would be indispensable. Right towards the end of his life he approved of the action of the Government of India in sending army units to defend Kashmir. Nevertheless, hope and endeavour remained that non-violence should prevail and on this count he was implacably opposed, let us remember, not only to the Communists but also to the anarchist revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh and his Hindustan Socialist Republican Army, to the Chittagong Armoury Raiders and to Subhas Bose and his INA. It is of importance to stress this latter point since many who conveniently make use of Gandhiji's opposition to the Communists on the ground that the latter refuse to accept non-violence as a creed, equally conveniently omit to mention whether, on the same ground, they would put all others who adopt a similar approach, beyond the pale. In that event they would end up being as lonely and forlorn as the Mahatma was in his last years without, of course, the saving grace of his ceaseless activity and sacrifice.

Gandhiji's opposition to Bolshevism and Communism stemmed, however, from a still more basic position than the absolutisation of non-violence. It stemmed from opposition to modern civilisation itself from which he correctly saw, Bolshevism sprang and which it was pledged to develop fully by negation of its source, that is through the accomplishment of the socialist revolution. It is the outlook embodied in *Hind Swaraj* that was the bedrock of his determination to hold back Bolshevism. It will be recalled that though the book was written

in 1909, far from being repudiated by the Mahatma, it was always upheld by him as the embodiment of his most profound beliefs. Tendulkar correctly points out that "*Hind Swaraj* is the quintessence of Gandhi's ideas". It will be recalled that in that book the author declared that "it is not the British people who are ruling India, but it is modern civilisation..... India's salvation consists in unlearning what she has learnt during the past fifty years or so. The railways, telegraphs, hospitals, lawyers, doctors and such like have all to go." He sharply assails Saklatvala "Comrade Saklatvala swears by the modern rush. I wholeheartedly detest this mad desire to destroy distance and time, to increase animal appetites and go to the ends of the earth for their satisfaction". Still later in 1936 he declares "The revival of the village is possible, only when it is no more exploited. Industrialisation on a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers as the problems of competition and marketing come in. Therefore, we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use". In the same year he tells Basil Mathews of his difference with Jawaharlal Nehru "He believes in industrialisation. I have grave doubts about its usefulness for India".

Tagore On Mahatma

It was not only the material basis of modern civilisation that stank in Gandhiji's nostrils. It was also the rationalism which was its philosophy, the scientific outlook that alone was consistent with it. One has only to recall the noble controversy between the Mahatma and Tagore and to read again the rebuke the poet administered when Gandhiji termed the 1934 Bihar earthquake as an 'Act of God': "It is all the more unfortunate, because this kind of unscientific view of phenomena is too readily accepted by a large section of our countrymen. I keenly feel the indignity of it, when I am compelled to utter a truism in asserting that physical catastrophes have their inevitable and exclusive origin in a certain combination of physical facts."

Thus, it is not as a liberal democrat we find Gandhiji opposing Bolshevism and Communism but as an opponent of modern, capitalist civilisation. It can be said that in the conditions of the 1920s and thereafter in India there were two ideological forces which superseded or negated the then-petitionist liberal democracy—Gandhism and Communism. Two polar opposites which united in their mutual opposition. There was identity as well as opposition, indeed, the identity as well as the opposition sprang from a common source—implacable hostility to the type of "civilisation" which was responsible for the British exploitation of India. The hostility was equally keenly manifested against the attitude of compromise towards this civilisation that the liberal democrats essentially based themselves upon. If Gandhism was, the negation of this liberalism (carrying forward Tilak's thrust), Communism was the negation of the negation. Communism negated the irrational and archaic protest of Gandhism but carried forward the

latter's negation of liberal democracy—totality of opposition, a total concept of power and civilisation and a total approach to the problem of mass activity.

At this point one would like to emphasise that Gandhiji have essentially the same approach to the problem of power as the Communists. For both power is not a matter of politics alone nor of a certain institutional arrangement of checks and balances. Power is the concentrated essence of social achievement, the summing of the social situation. The Communists carry forward the concept with an analysis of the contradictions inherent in any society and, therefore, in a class-divided society they postulate the existence of a ruling class, itself based on the ruling relation of production. Therefore the problem of power is always the problem of civilisation and cannot even begin to be tackled unless the particular civilisation of which it is the concentrated essence is itself tackled—accepted, rejected or sublated. Gandhiji was far too profound an intuitionist to be beguiled by liberalism, even though the failure of instinct to rise to the level of intelligence made his failure, as well, more profound than the neat schemes of liberal reform. Liberals are notoriously adaptive but persons like Gandhiji all too often feel the darkness closing in upon them—he had no message to give on Independence Day, the man who said that his life was his message.

Concept of Power

The total nature of Gandhiji's concept of power is manifested in two basic forms, first and foremost in his indictment of British rule. To him British rule was Satanic not only because it had reduced the vast majority of Indians to the position of starving cattle but because by doing this and in other ways it had debased the very soul of the people. It had reduced the people not only to the position of slavery but what was worse made them unaware of freedom and of identity. The second manifestation of his concept of power has already been touched upon earlier, i.e., his idea of what should replace British rule, his idea of Swaraj. What is proposed was the replacement of the "civilisation" imposed by British imperialism by the revival of the village community, by Ramrajya as he called it. It was not easy for even many of his colleagues to take him seriously. Just as with his non-violence, his khaddar and his wearing of the loin-cloth, they took this, too, as useful gimmick which would enable the Congress to endear itself to the people, particularly the rural masses. But this was not how the old man saw it. To him the replacement of British industrialism by Indian industrialism might mean somewhat less of a crushing burden but in no sense was it a real alternative power, i.e., a new focal point of change of civilisation. To put it in scientific terms the replacement of British imperialism by Indian capitalism was not his perspective precisely because the latter was only a slightly less painful version of the former. He was in deadly earnest about non attachment, the circumscribing of desires, the reestablishment of the union between agriculture and village industry in the village

community. It is based on this concept that he conceives of Panchayatiraj : "In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever-widening, never ascending, never descending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But, it will be an oceanic circle, whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of villages". It is significant that once again at this time (1945) he repeats "I do not believe industrialisation is necessary in any case for any country. It is much less so for India". And this whole approach was conditioned by the fact that he believed that industrialism or modernism was a total power which would do away with the village and thence, with Indian identity and thus, had to be opposed by a power as total and with as much countervailing force, i.e., the resurrected Indian village. It was because of this outlook that while he refused to believe that reforms would be of any help, he was always ready to compromise with the British rulers until he felt that his countervailing power was ready to transform itself into true independent rule.

He was a shrewd tactician & had a marvellous feel for the mood of the masses at any given point of time. But his tactics were linked to a strategic objective and conditioned by it. His means were what they were because his end was what it was. It is rather puerile to postulate that he believed in the supremacy of means over ends. On the contrary, as is the case with any profound and thought through philosophy means—ends are an organic entity. The means that Gandhiji advocated—though he was never able to fully realise them—were consistent with the end he wished to achieve—which, too, remained unrealised. Since the end was Ramrajya or the resurrected Indian village, the means could only be satyagraha.

Satyagraha and Mass Action

One has to remember that satyagraha as Gandhiji conceived was radically different from the kind of mass action that he was able to lead. There is truth in his contention that he was the only true satyagrahi and that Vinobha, perhaps, also passed the test. Nevertheless, satyagraha remained as a norm and the very rigour and difficulty of it was eminently suited for the end which was to be attained by it. Satyagraha involved the transformation of the personality of he who would embrace it. It involved the strictest possible discipline, even to the point of the extinction of the individual. Self-control, *brahmacharya*, vegetarianism, shunning of sophisticated civilisation, the embracing of poverty so as to achieve non-attachment, being shot through with the Karma-yogi concept of Hinduism and the entrance into an Ashram—this was what being a satyagrahi meant. It was this kind of training that Gandhiji visualised for the leadership he wished to create, the vanguard he wished to be able to head to realise the awakening of India. There is nothing of liberal democracy

In all this nor even the same approach to the problem of party organisation that Western political systems have familiarised us with. If one searches for an analogy the only fitting one will be Mao and the training of cadres at Yen-an in the 1940s. Indeed, one can say that the two original and unique leaders so far produced by the Asian resurgence are Gandhi and Mao—with obvious differences in outlook, methodology, objective and circumstances. Both grasped the peasant as the central fact of their civilisations, both wished to achieve total power and complete awakening, both sought to create and recreate their vanguard organisation. Both achieved immensely and both suffered profound failure.

Congress and Gandhiji

For Gandhiji the Congress was an instrument for bringing together those sections of the masses who had achieved a certain level of awakening. And it was from among them that he hoped to rear the genuine satyagrahis. To put it another way, the Congress was an united front mass organisation, a transmission belt as well as a reservoir from whom the vanguard was to be shaped. This attitude of his alone explains the apparent inconsistency of his links with the Congress. To start with he establishes his Satyagraha Sabha in addition to the Congress. Then he remoulds the Congress into a functioning mass organisation through the reforms he sponsors at the 1920 Nagpur session. He retains more or less complete control of this organisation and yet he maintains separate set-ups for various kinds of constructive activities. Then in 1934 he severs his formal link with the Congress. When he announces his retirement he states that he has the impression that "a very large body of Congress intelligentsia were tired of my methods and views, and the programme based upon them... I seem to be going in a direction just the opposite of what many of the most intellectual Congressmen would gladly and enthusiastically take, if they were not hampered by their unexampled loyalty to me... If they (socialist ideas—M.S.) gain ascendancy in the Congress, as they well may, I cannot remain in the Congress." But this formal retirement never made him indifferent to the kind of dominant leadership that was in actual control of the Congress. Whether it was soothing and smoothening out Jawaharlal, Nehru or implacably pushing out Subhas Bose, he was very much concerned that whoever was at the helm in the Congress should be, ultimately, amenable to his control. Those whom he could not hope to control he had removed with a ruthlessness most appropriate to any organiser of mass action. It is also significant to recall in this connection, that whenever the question of mass action came on the agenda of the Congress Gandhiji not only assumed control but publicly proclaimed himself "general" with the power to appoint local "dictators" as representatives responsible to him. And these are the people he wanted to mould in his own image who would function as the vanguard of mass action as well as of the mass organisation.

It needs emphasising that just as his concept of power and of the means to that power were total so was his approach to the individual. There was no divisions, in his view, between the public and private selves of those who had pledged themselves to his movement. His own autobiography and the letters from Noakhali on further experiments in brahmacharya are not eccentricities but integral to the very outlook of the Mahatma. Those who have had the experience of being inmates of his ashrams know this only too well. He was an interventionist at every level of living.

It is here that one comes across yet another basic line of division between Gandhiji and the Communists. If the two are united in a total ideological—social vision of power and insist equally upon the total discipline of struggle, the two part company not only on the approach to science, industrialisation, rational analysis and social conceptions. The two differ radically on the problem of the emancipation of the masses. Certainly, Gandhiji wanted the uplift of the masses, an end to the scourge and blight of the abysmal poverty which reduced them to nothingness, no less strongly than the Communist revolutionaries. But to Gandhiji the masses were always the dumb millions whose representative he sought to be and from whose every eye he wished to wipe every tear. They were not visualised by him to be capable of revolutionary initiative, much less of self-emancipation. He would never have appreciated the aphorism of Marx that the emancipation of the workers would be accomplished by the workers or it would not be accomplished. He would lead the masses to his goal, not enlighten them to win control over their own destiny. He was an adherent of the trusteeship theory not only in regard to the relation between workers and capitalists or tenants and landlords but in general towards the masses. It is this opposition, to self-emancipation, this adherence to "guided" advance to a goal fixed by the guide that explains his very strong reaction to any transgression by any section of the masses of the rules and regulations he laid down for any struggle. It also explains why after the very early actions in Champaran and Ahmedabad he never encouraged local struggles by any section of the masses for their own specific demands—the best manner by which the mass mind is cleared for enlightenment as to the general issues pertaining to their self-emancipation. As a matter of fact, he specifically discouraged both Dr. Rammanohar Lohia and Nirmal Bose when they turned to him for his blessings in their endeavours to use satyagraha for sectional and local struggles. This was only natural for a leader who wanted not advance but resurrection.

Religion and Mahatma

In any evolution of Gandhiji's ideological outlook one has, of course, to keep in the forefront the tremendous role that religion played in his make-up. Indeed, his totalist approach, if one may be permitted to use this clumsy phrase, to the problem of

power and of the means to attain it, is rooted in a consuming devotion to religion, specifically to Hinduism and still more specifically to a particular, Karmayog in understanding of the essentials of Hinduism, based on an activist interpretation of the Gita. "I count no sacrifice too great for the sake of seeing God face to face. The whole of my activity, whether it may be called social, political, humanitarian or ethical, is directed to that end. And as I know that God is found more often in the lowliest of His creatures than in the high and mighty, I am struggling to reach the status of these. I cannot do so without their service. Hence my passion for the service of the suppressed classes. And as I cannot render this service without entering politics, I find myself in them. Thus, I am no master. I am but a struggling, erring, humble servant of India and there through of humanity...For me, there road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and therethrough of humanity". He adds "The only two eternal principles are Truth and Non-Violence (Ahimsa). I would go even further and say that the only eternal principle is Truth. For, although Truth and Non-violence are one and the same thing, if circumstances arise in which I have to choose between the two, I would not hesitate to throw Non-violence to the winds and abide by Truth, which is supreme in my opinion." A religion of Truth and the pursuit of Truth through ceaseless toil. This is the Gita of Gandhiji. And were it not for the constraints of prejudice from which he could not unshackle himself, this could have been the path of praxis, the self-creating practice based on, penetrating into and transforming objective reality which is the path of the modern revolutionaries, the Communists.

Mahatma's Failure

An interesting point with which one would like to conclude this brief review of the relation between Gandhiji and the Communists vis-a-vis power and action, is whom did the Mahatma reflect, whom did he represent and whom did he benefit? This composite question has become much easier to answer now that the avowed disciples of the Mahatma, who still swear by his name, have ruled us for the last two decades. It has also become easier with the development of the Marxist method of analysis, or rather its return to the manner in which Marx deployed it in his *Eighteenth Brumaire*.

Gandhiji reflected with amazing approximation the ruined peasant who had lost the village community but not yet won anything for whom, therefore, the only way to live was to achieve resurrection. He was the very embodiment of what Marx described as the "peculiar melancholy of the Hindoo." The passivity of the peasant, however, was breaking down, even as his misery was increasing, in the last years of the nineteenth century and the dawn of the present one. He was reacting and differentiating along with the start of the development of a particular type of capitalism in the village which came with the full onset of the commercialisation of agriculture and the link with the world market. The peasants

were turning commodity producers and a stratum among them achieving extended reproduction and the beginnings of capital accumulation. Such a process coincided with a far more rapid growth of the Indian capitalist class in the field of industry and urban trade—a class which did not cut its connections either with the village or with precapitalist modes of exploitation. This class had made clear turn to acquiring an industrial base in the last decade of the nineteenth century without giving up its mercantile mode, however. Nevertheless, the turn to industry inevitably implied a turn to opposition to imperialism with, of course, the retention of the propensity to compromise. Finally, there was a large urban intelligentsia, spawned before the onset of industrial capitalism but gravitating towards it. Reflecting the mood of the peasant, Gandhiji represented the link and the bridge between the ensemble of these diverse class forces but which were headed in the same direction of opposition to British imperialism. The one class to whom he remained alien, despite the episode of Ahmedabad, was the working class. But this class, in the India of those days, was not only younger but also far weaker than its capitalist counterpart. The representatives of this class in India had a much tougher job ahead of them than their Chinese colleagues, though the latter had to face specific difficulties of their own especially after the success of the revolution. These representatives could not obtain on time the requisite maturity to grasp and then to transform the Indian reality of the quarter-century before freedom was won. Leadership through alliance and participation and playing a forefront anti-imperialist role was never fully grasped as a strategic scheme and much less consistently applied. This historic failure combined with the objective organised striking power and articulation tilting in favour of the urban industrial capitalist class led to the consequence that movement led by Gandhiji, ultimately, benefited it the most. And led it be said in the name of the Truth that Gandhiji himself certainly tilted towards this class.

Retained, Utilised and Discarded

So to say, the liberal democrats triumphed over the peasant radical, utilised his tremendous "great-rooted" popularity and discarded him at the proper time, all the while hopefully retaining him as a mascot. Perhaps the time has come when in the centenary year mascot-role will be abandoned—there is a symbolism about the reported meeting between Rajaji and Golwalkar on the eve of the Gandhi centenary celebrations. The "conscience keeper" of Gandhiji, as Rajaji was termed for decades, meets the "conscience maker" of Godse. If this is historic irony, the scene can be relieved by a cheering paradox. Gandhiji's polar opposite, his negation takes up his satyagraha, combines it with more traditional forms of action, and transforms the *hartal* into the *bandh*. If there is discarding at one end there is subsuming at the other. The centenary year will release its own tensions.

In Defence of Trade Union Rights

SATISH LOOMBA

THE battle for the defence of trade union rights has reached a new point.

In every country where the bourgeoisie holds State power, the workers have had to wage a prolonged and bitter struggle to establish basic trade union rights. The most fundamental of these are the right to form and run a trade union, the right to bargain collectively with the employer, the right to strike. The full and free exercise of these rights naturally leads to auxiliary rights, which are important in themselves but pivot round these basic rights.

Recognition of these rights does not mean freedom to exercise them. Nor does the battle end once the rights are laid down by statute. For, there is a constant attempt to erode these rights through administrative and executive measures, through exercise of the coercive powers of the State, and through changes in law.

India under bourgeois rule is no exception.

II

The right to form and conduct trade unions was won by the Indian working class in 1926 when the British rulers enacted the Indian Trade Unions Act. Along with this right came certain restrictions in the shape of registration of a union, submission annually of the accounts to the Registrar, mandatory provisions in the constitution of the union including restriction on the number of outsiders who can be elected to leading positions, etc.

The constant attempt since then has been to make further inroads into the free exercise of these rights. It is common experience to which any trade unionist can testify (barring of course those

belonging to INTUC) that registration is delayed for months for extremely flimsy or even no reasons. When the Code of Discipline was accepted as a purely voluntary instrument, in some States registration was denied until the unions agreed to incorporate the voluntary conditions regarding strikes into their constitutions. And now demands are being made that the Registrar of Trade Unions should have powers to de-register unions, that they should have powers to conduct elections of office-bearers, etc. It is being argued that the minimum subscription should be raised. And it is being insistently demanded that "outsiders" should be eliminated from the unions.

All sorts of arguments are advanced in support of these suggestions. All of these have one common proclaimed aim—safeguarding the 'real' interests of workers. The only snag is that the 'real' interests are to be safeguarded as interpreted by the employers or the bureaucrats of the bourgeois State or by the trade unionists of the INTUC, the leadership of which in the ultimate analysis is nothing but the trade union arm of the bourgeoisie.

It is argued for instance that increasing the powers of the Registrar would mean the weeding out of 'bogus' or 'inefficient' unions. Raising the minimum subscription of membership would yield more funds to the unions. Keeping out 'outsiders' would save the unions from being 'exploited' for political ends. All attractive arguments.

But all of them miss one essential point. The interest of a class should be interpreted by that class and not by someone else. Will the bourgeoisie accept what

is in the interests of the bourgeoisie as interpreted by the working class?

Secondly, there is the article in the Fundamental Rights Chapter of the Constitution which guarantees freedom of association. The working class, composed of citizens of India, presumably comes under that guarantee. How it has to run its associations is its business. How much subscription it has to charge its members is its business; whom it wants to elect as its leaders is also its business. What political affiliations it wants is entirely its own affair.

The Government of India has declared its intention to debar "outsiders" from unions of government employees. This measure is being taken at a time when thousands of leaders who are employees are being dismissed or suspended for the crime of participating in a one-day token strike. Quite apart from the fact that the Government order runs counter to the Supreme Court decision laying down that dismissal for mere participation even in an illegal strike cannot be allowed, the plain sum of the matter is that all these thousands will ipso facto become 'outsiders' once they are dismissed. Hence all that would be necessary to get rid of an inconvenient leadership would be to make them 'outsiders' through dismissal.

Even if these ex-employees are excluded from the definition of 'outsiders', who are these 'outsiders' who are to be by law excluded from positions of responsibility in unions? The trade union movement in India, as in every colonial country, owes its beginning and development to the efforts of these 'outsiders', who were political leaders or social workers. The early presidents,

for instance, of the AITUC included, Lajpat Rai, Jawaharlal Nehru and others. The reason for this development was twofold: the rank and file of the Indian working class was illiterate and a heterogeneous mass based on the peasantry, and the rural poor; and secondly, the trade union movement was an integral part of the national movement against British imperialism. Now on specious pleas the bourgeoisie wants to deprive the working class of the established leadership in order to weaken the movement.

Another plank in this attack is the proposal to increase the powers of the Registrar of Trade Unions. He, it is said, is a 'neutral' officer. In our experience we have yet to meet a 'neutral' officer in a class State. Such a bird does not exist.

The Government of India voted for Conventions 87 and 98 of the International Labour Organisation, but has failed to ratify these for application in India. These Conventions guarantee freedom of association, and any curtailment of even the limited positions which exist today would directly amount to deliberate and wilful flouting of these international conventions.

In fact, what is required is immediate withdrawal of all restrictions on the right to form associations—a right guaranteed by the Constitution and upheld by ILO Conventions 87 and 98.

III

A trade union is formed for the specific purpose of defending and furthering the rights and interests of its members as a group. In order to be able to discharge its functions, it must have certain rights. These include the right to be recognised as a collective bargaining agent, and a forum for collective bargaining. The position in these vital matters is most unsatisfactory.

In Bombay and M.P., the provisions of the Bombay Industrial Relations Act apply which confer recognition on a union declared to have the largest membership from among the rivals. Verification of membership is done by the Labour Department of the Government. Hence,

except in isolated cases, it is a foregone conclusion that it is the INTUC union which will be duly certified as having the largest membership. In other States there is no statute governing recognition—it is granted, or withheld, at the will of the employer or under the Code of Discipline. Under the Code verification is again done by that 'neutral' officer of the capitalist State—the Labour Officer. So, whether recognition is granted by such verification under law or under the Code, or by the will of the employer, it all amounts to the same thing. The fact that worker repeatedly go on strike in defiance of the expressed mandate and strenuous efforts at strike-breaking by the so-called recognised union owes its occurrence to this method of determining the representative union.

However, recognition of a representative union is necessary for the proper discharge of its functions by a trade union and for all collective bargaining.

The only correct and democratic method of determining the representative character of a union is through the secret vote of the workers. Major trade union centres like AITUC, HMS and UTUC support this proposal. But understandably the INTUC opposes it. They advance the age-old arguments of all opponents of democracy—quality cannot be sacrificed to "quantity"; voting will lead to violence; voting will put a premium on those who can mislead workers through "attractive" slogans. These arguments are so hackneyed that no serious answer is required. But they betray their extreme nervousness at the prospect of losing their privileged position as the installed "representatives" of the workers. Underlying these arguments is the contempt (and fear) in which they hold the working class whose "recognised" leaders they claim to be.

The Central Government has de-recognised various representative unions of its employees. In the Railways and Defence rival INTUC unions exist already. In other sectors, attempts will be made to give a foothold to the

splitters, specially in the P and T where spurious unions, formed overnight, have already been recognised as representatives of the workers none of whom is a member of these scab unions.

The M.P. Government has passed an Ordinance providing for recognition by ballot. This ordinance has many obnoxious features, but it does provide for ballot in however truncated a form and hedged in by objectionable restrictions it may be. It is nevertheless enough to prick the INTUC balloon in that State. Already its leaders are clamouring that Presidential assent to the Ordinance should be withheld as it has not been approved by the ILC as has been the convention regarding all matters affecting labour. But this argument sounds thin coming from those who never objected to the ruthless 'Chavan' Ordinance promulgated by the Congress Government at the Centre outlawing strike by the Government employees and the "Morarji" Section 36-AD of the Banking Amendment Bill placing outrageous curbs on the exercise of legitimate trade union rights by bank employees.

The ballot for recognition has thus to be pressed forward on the basis of secret ballot. Already the proposal has found favour with some employers' organisations who have found through experience that the experiment of recognising stooges is not yielding the expected result of keeping the workers in check. It is much better to deal with those who can deliver the goods.

It has been the deliberate policy of the bourgeoisie in India to replace collective bargaining by a system of interference by its conciliation officers and a net work of adjudication. This serves a double purpose, as it weakens organisation, replaces collective mass action by legal proceedings before courts, and at the same time compel workers to work under the same onerous conditions against which he had preferred demands through long years of tortuous and costly litigation from the tribunal to the High Court, and right up to the Supreme Court.

Thus the time has come when the TUs must raise their voice in defence of collective bargaining, directly between the workers and the employers, without interference by the State.

IV

The sanction behind collective bargaining is the right to strike. Strike means withholding labour by the seller of labour power unless conditions on which he is willing to sell it are accepted. But since this labour power is the source of production which yields profits to the capitalists, naturally the capitalist would like to deny this right to the worker. To make this denial a legal equation, the "right to lock-out" is given parity with the "right to strike". But in fact this is one of the many fictions of bourgeois law which hides the reality of exploitation behind the facade of legal parity. The right to strike is the right to withhold labour in order to get better conditions to live. The "right" to lockout is the right to prevent work in order to starve workers into submission. One is the only weapon with which the exploited have to win better conditions; the other is one of the weapons to force submission.

The right to strike has therefore been consistently under attack. The Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 defines legal and illegal strikes and prohibits strikes during the pendency of a dispute before an adjudicator or an arbitrator during the period of a settlement, and in case of public utility concerns without notice. The courts have further divided legal strikes into justified and unjustified. The Code of Discipline seeks to lay down still further curbs. And now the proposal is mooted to deny this right to Government employees. These employees cover not only administrative employees working in the offices of Government, but lakhs and lakhs of industrial workers in railways, Defence installations, P and T, CPWD etc. Already voices are being raised that this right must be withheld from all workers.

The arguments advanced all centre on the age-old one—how can a society permit workers to

hold it to ransom specially in the essential services? Special emphasis is laid on the needs of development in a country like India. Sometimes a plea is advanced that simultaneously with banning strikes compulsory adjudication or arbitration should be provided to settle disputes.

On the face of it these arguments may seem attractive to some who may be really and genuinely taken in by the plea of national interest inherent in these arguments. However, this is far from correct. National interest does not consist in suppressing the toiling section compelling it to work in dismal conditions on low wage for the private benefit of the employers. In a capitalist system like the one existing in India, conflict of class interests is inherent in the conditions which exist. This conflict cannot be resolved by banning efforts by the workers to better their conditions. The whole attempt is anti-democratic and therefore anti-national.

It is not the workers who, eleven years after the acceptance of the need-based wage convention and twentyone years after independence are seeking to get a square deal, who are holding the country to ransom. It is the monopolists, who in their insatiable thirst for more and more super-profits are squeezing

the workers by denying them an adequate share of the produce and the community as a whole by price rise after price rise, who are in reality blackmailing the people. It is these gentlemen, and their class brethren and servitors, the top bureaucrats, who are responsible for the uninhibited loot of the people. It is the politicians who serve the bourgeoisie who, by following policies which have led to the growth of monopoly and the impoverishment of the people, are really anti-national.

No wonder when the organised workers strike, it is all of these who come forward as a united phalanx with ordinances, firings, lathi-charges, teargas attacks: dismissals and victimisation of workers, to fight the crusade in the interest of their class. It is these very people who are demanding a ban on strike, gilding this slogan for permitting exploitation with a concern for national interest.

V

The battle for the defence of trade union rights is thus not only of concern to the workers, it is part of the national struggle for correct democratic values, for breaking the growing grip of the monopolists and their henchmen on our economy and on our politics, for opening a way forward to advance.

The concluding contributions in the series Discussion on Czechoslovakia have had to be held over for want of space and will be published in the next issue of Mainstream Dec. 7.

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Prof. Kahn's Confession

M.S.N.MENON

THE "open society" of America has its advantages. It can make open suggestions for evil. The American magazine, *Fortune*, a mouthpiece of Big Business, carried in its November issue an article by Professor Herman Kahn. With remarkable frankness he has revealed the far-reaching plans hatched by Washington for subversion against the socialist countries, firstly against Czechoslovakia, and examines the lessons their authors had drawn or ought to have drawn, from their failure.

Prof. Kahn needs no introduction. He is the author of the book "On Thermonuclear War," published in 1960, in which he called for a "pre-emptive" strike against the Soviet Union. He is also famous for another treatise, "On Escalation", in which he worked out a stage-by-stage plan for a global thermonuclear war.

Kahn started his brilliant career in the Rand Corporation, which in the USA is dubbed as the Pentagon's "brains trust." He then rose to the office of Director of the Hudson Institute, which is another "brains trust", but of the White House. It has the task of drafting political recommendations for the US Administration in the conduct of its foreign policy.

In recent years, however, Kahn has been out of the limelight. He, too, has fallen in line with Washington's new strategy of a "quiet" struggle against the socialist world. The ideologists of the new strategy are indeed very subtle. They say that there is little difference between the two opposing systems—capitalism and socialism—and that they are in fact "converging." They also say that the conflict between the two systems is artificial and all that is required is to "built bridges."

Evidently, Washington "ideologists" have come to a new reckoning with the realities of the world. The first reality is that more than half the world has already gone over to socialism. What is worse, this half of the world, through its immense resources and manpower, will surpass any and all other powers in the world. Even a "pre-emptive" nuclear strike against the Soviet Union is dangerous because in the final result the western part of Europe may perhaps never recover again. It is thus likely that Washington has decided that half a loaf is better than none.

For a time, the substance of this new strategy was not fully revealed. However, the American press divulged enough of the details to make it clear that Washington's ultimate aims remained the overthrow of the socialist system. Only the method has changed. The new strategy is to erode the faith of the people of the socialist countries in socialism. Of course, Kahn admits that the use of fire and sword is not ruled out if the infidels refuse to accept the new gods.

But where to begin? The Hungarian experiment showed that exporting counter-revolution was not easy. Poland and the GDR are too tightly fastened to the bosom of the Soviet Union. Rumania of course had opened a chink in the system. Finally, Czechoslovakia was chosen for the experiment. It had strategic advantages, and certain developments there showed that they could be taken advantage of. Kahn says there were two principal objectives: to test how the Soviet Union would react, and whether a country could be detached from the socialist system. Kahn admits that Washington

and Bonn had hoped that the socialist countries would not "intervene." He does not explain what led to this conclusion.

How was this "decisive experiment"—as Kahn terms the events in Czechoslovakia—planned? The answer is furnished by him in some detail. The experiment was to be in stages: "(a) recognition of Bonn in the near future (by Czechoslovakia) which would be followed by West German credits, trade and influence; (b) the establishment of strong Western, especially French and German, influence in the sphere of culture; (c) renunciation of 'democratic centralism'; (d) the coming into being in the near future of a government standing above the Party (the Communist Party) and a general weakening of the Party's influence; (e) the appearance of opposition parties and the setting up of an effective political opposition; (f) the creation of an 'economic miracle'; (g) the possible appearance...of social democracy with capitalist shades."

The picture is clear: a "quiet" counter-revolution to be carried out by anti-socialist forces operating within Czechoslovakia, using active assistance from without and in the first place from West Germany. The model is Yugoslavia, but the planners wanted something more—the destruction of the Communist Party.

Next on the agenda was the overthrow of the Party leadership and government in Poland. Let us see Kahn's meticulous planning on how this replacement was to be effected: "(a) either by an independent, super-nationalist and comparatively anti-Soviet but Communist group; (b) or by a reformist regime which could also be independent, super-nationalist and anti-Soviet."

The plan had other aims also. Subversion was also planned against other socialist countries, in the first place the GDR. Incidentally, Kahn visualised that this could "take place in a rather stormy and dangerous way" and "perhaps" in the wider context of the unification of the two Germanies.

And finally: Kahn notes that the "weakening of the Warsaw

Pact, together with the strengthening of Western Germany...could one day end with an attack by West Germany on the USSR with the support of the United States." But Kahn confesses that "the majority of Western specialists consider such a prospect absolutely unrealistic." Nevertheless, in Kahn's own plan, this is the ultimate objective.

Today, when these grandiose plans have ended in total fiasco, Herman Kahn engages in an agonising reappraisal of what was planned and done, indulges in self-criticism and propounds lessons. Naturally he has no intention of giving up the ultimate aims. Obviously, the professor and others of his ilk will evolve a new strategy in the light of the recent "experiment." But before doing so, Kahn wants to draw the appropriate lessons. He says: "Many American specialists on the Soviet Union, including myself, just as in the past, underrated the ability of the leadership (of the socialist countries) to act in defence of their interests," an "incredible underestimation of the strength of nerve and the resolution of the Russians" as he calls it.

This calls for a new assessment

of the reflexes of the "monolith." Kahn admits that Washington was indulging in wishful thinking. So he does an accountant's job in drawing up a balance-sheet on the Czechoslovak experiment. The liabilities are indeed high. The assets are the lessons learned from the fiasco. He gives guidelines for the future.

First, Kahn warns that the Czechoslovak events will "reduce to the minimum or even stop" the Development of earlier tendencies within the socialist community on which the success of the subversion plan had been pinned.

Second, "one should not go too far," for the Soviet Union "will not remain impassive even though it desires relaxation with the West."

Third, he admits that the "patience and, at the same time, the indomitable determination" displayed by the Soviet Union "can evoke a new feeling of admiration and respect for the Russians," particularly in the Third World.

Kahn is alarmed by all this, particularly because the young countries see the successes of the socialist countries against the

intrigues of the imperialists, whereas the USA and Western Europe, according to him, offer a "picture of anarchy and internal decomposition with its characteristic continuing riots and disorders."

Kahn says that the socialist community, too, cannot remain unaffected by what happened. He forecasts "a change in the direction of isolationism—a modern variant of 'socialism in one country'."

Kahn's exposé of the plan and his self-flagellation have one lesson for the world. The West remains inflexible in its desire to overthrow the socialist system. And there is a lesson for those who rushed in to criticise Soviet action in Czechoslovakia: could the Soviet Union have stood aside and watched this whole scheme of subversion take place in Czechoslovakia, when the Soviet people are supporting morally and materially all those who are fighting against imperialist intrigues all over the world? The desire of the Czechoslovak people for a more humanistic form of socialism is understandable. One cannot find fault with it. But they are hostages of current history.

BOOK REVIEW

Vital Question Unanswered

Gandhi and Nehru : By M. Chalapathi Rau : Allied Publishers, New Delhi, 1967 ; pp. 152 ; Rs. 12.

THE author is eminently equipped to deliberate upon a delicate theme, also a relevant theme such as the one in the work under review. The plan of the work is simple and imaginative: the first part deals with the *Master*; the second with the *Disciple*; then follows the *Dialogue*.

Let us begin with three assertions made by the author: first, there was an "air of mendicancy about our political struggle"; second, "Tilak had courageously made sedition the breath of self-respecting Indians";

third, the reference to the legislative contributions of the Indian pioneers as "perpetual prattle in councils." As for the first, if gradualistic constitutionalism of the liberal school (for instance), is dismissed as no better than mendicancy, one might as well applaud the hysterics of Beverley Nichols and his tribe. An objective reassessment of the various strands of the Indian Revolution is the only way out of pseudo-inferences doled out by prejudice and mythological analysis. As for the second, it is unfounded that Tilak and sedition went

together. Tilak was a nationalist, like many others, and his protestantism was not synonymous with sedition: he stood for *Swaraj*, boycott, *Swadeshi* and self-reliance. Of course, he had little faith in the progressive perfectibility of politics of the possible; and, brushing aside the equation of politics and benevolence, Tilak introduced the politics of grit instead. As for the third, the quintessence of liberal gradualism in India was to 'take occasion by the hand and make the bounds of freedom wider yet.' The patience, tena-

city and self-respect of the masters of the possible have their place in our history. It would, therefore, be no more than a paradox to minimize the contributions of the liberals and the militant nationalists, one way or another, and yet give the Gandhian strand all the acclaim.

The author feels that Gandhi's "passion play of tremendous power and pathos" was persisted with, for "there was no alternative leadership, though there were attempts; there was never an alternative method." We are too near Gandhi (and that is truer in the case of Nehru); the researcher of posterity might be placed in a more objective position to go deeper into this proposition. It is equally difficult to favourably account for Gandhi's socialism and economic programme. To say that the Gandhian influence gave "a fresh lease of life" to "indigenous literatures, indigenous science and indigenous industries" does not sound convincing.

Like several other tenets, Gandhi's idea of non-violence defies scientific analysis. If "to him the individual's morality was not different from the morality of groups and states," one fails to understand what prevented Gandhi from defending himself against assailants in South Africa and why should one credit (or discredit) him with the imponderable that "had he survived the murderous assault of January 30, he would have forgiven his assailant." The law of the land, as it happened, took its own course. Abstinence is forgiveness only when there is the power to punish, said Gandhi. It is simple; because it is meaningless when it proceeds from a helpless creature. Gandhi believed: "A mouse hardly forgives a cat when it allows itself to be torn to pieces by her". How does one, then, equate Gandhian non-violence with the pragmatic cores of national and international challenges? Why this spectacle, then, of non-violence projecting itself into defencelessness? And, of course, there remains the basic question: how far did Gandhi succeed in his thought and action

in vindicating 'the possible' in non-violence?

It seems an utterly wild surmise even to talk of "limited application" of non-violence in the absence of a State's striking power to defend itself against cavaliers beyond the frontiers. What, then, is the role of non-violence when it comes to choosing between destruction of national independence and blunting an enemy's armour? The author, much to our relief, remarks later that the Congress "had no non-violent message for the world."

In dealing with the disciple, the author has rightly pointed out that despite a concurrent identification with the master, Nehru "would have wished for no carbon copies." Nehru's non-conformism led to his restatements on secularism, socialism, democracy and humanism; and yet, one wonders why Nehru did not, or could not, transform these primary ideas into practice—if possible with and through the Congress, if necessary without and in spite of the Congress. The gradual disillusionment of the socialist core of the Congress and their eventual exit are bewildering in the context of Nehru's pronounced commitment to the cause. It is an unedifying burlesque to see Nehru surrounded by advocates of *Status quo*, before and after independence. He seemed to be obsessed with the institutional necessity of the Congress, however malignantly warring and self-defeating its constituents. He had a far more pragmatic feel of the socio-economic realities of the time; and yet Nehru could not force the pace of national transformation to keep in step with the technological revolution. He might have carried the Congress quantitatively; but it is doubtful if he succeeded in tuning it to ideological pulsations. The political transformation failed, therefore, to beget the much-talked-of socio-economic revolution. All Nehru's egalitarianism notwithstanding, the cruel fact is that the Congress proved its incapacity to carry itself and the people briskly along the path Nehru talked so much about. There is not much sense in blaming Nehru alone for all

the political pranks the Congress was permitted to play with an infant nation: for the fact seems to be that the liveried leadership, in Nehru's presence found itself dwarfed into imbecility. *Chanakya's* self-portrait makes a lot of sense: so does C.F. Andrews, confiding in Gokhale in a hitherto unpublished letter from Durban, dated January 30, 1913: "His (Gandhi's) work in South Africa is *done*—nobly done: and this time it was very near to a collapse. Everyone here says he is 'played out'. Polak, Kellenbach, Ritch etc.—all say the same. *He must go*, both for his own sake and for the community's. Yes! for the community's: for if he stays on he will dwarf everyone else and there will be no leaders here for at least another generation. It is painfully, palpably evident already; and it will be more evident still in a year's time, if he does not go..It is pitiful to see him here at work. He does everything—he *will* do everything; and people simply get to lean on him more and more, and the selfish ones take advantage of his goodness. He gets into the way of giving hasty orders without careful thinking (having to settle so many affairs) and when it comes to *big* things on which the whole issue is staked, again and again lately he has acted or thought hastily. He is one of the best men in the world! I love him....I cannot bear to think that it should all end in some great and huge mistake made in haste and repented at leisure, or not repented at all but persisted in because of a mind distracted and outworn." Comment is superfluous.

Do we, as we return to Nehru, take it that the Congress failed him in not letting him retire (temporarily though) and that the opposition also did not rise to the occasion? Shall we conclude thereby that Nehru's failure was the failure of the Indian people, for "even the youthful Nehru could do only what the country could help him to do"? One would agree with author that among Nehru's achievements are "the democratic process, the secular process, the planning process

and foreign policy"; but, "how much of it abides?"

Thereafter the Dialogue. The events and policies (or lack of them) leading to partition of India are not yet clear. However, the statement that "Gandhi was throughout protesting against partition; he was not a party to it in any way, but he did not oppose it in the way he could have opposed it", needed elaboration. The author should have given explanatory attention to the so-called Nehru-Patel differences. There is, then, no mention of the Tagore-Gandhi dialogue. It required a better handling of the *Dialogue* to signify that in his understanding of Gandhi and the expression he gave to it, "Nehru was the greatest Gandhian". As it is, there is paltry justification of the title here. It resembles a catalogue of events that swiftly overtook the leadership, leaving, in the process, a good many of them on the kerb. There are grim reminders in the author's analysis of the nagging role of the proverbial 'back-seat driver.' In his enthusiasm to concentrate upon events and issues—vicarious to the theme here—he has completely forgotten to tell us how the Master and the Disciple approached politics in two entirely different ways; how each identified a different perspective

of the country as it ought to be; how, like two individuals, each projected his prescription based on, of course, a variant diagnosis; and, how, and why, in spite of the several points of disagreement, disenchantment never came.

The deep-lying differences of upbringing, formative influences and orientation to the Indian Revolution apart, Nehru and Gandhi had different ways not only of looking at issues but also of dealing with them. If it was characteristic of Gandhi to put a premium on the role of religion in politics, Nehru's 'doubt' became his 'faith'—transforming his rationalism into the pragmatic realities of secular society (as precondition to a secular State). Scientific and always in quest of the acquisitions of modernity, Nehru had no patience with the cramping slumber of traditionalism and obscurantism. He revolted against religiosity and the dehydrated ethology of fatalism. In action, sacrifice, unity, forbearance and dedication, Nehru saw the only relevant tenets of individual and social regeneration, leading to the fruition of a new religion. Nehru's image of modern India was not that of 'trusteeship'; or, a qualified and minimal use of machine; he held before him the distant vision of India's agro-economic

revival and industrial regeneration as an ideal worth achieving—the several setbacks notwithstanding. To Gandhi, philosophical anarchism was attainable harmony; to Nehru the State came as a potent, relevant and effective instrument of diffusing the pervasive realities of social justice and rule of law. Both Gandhi and Nehru revolted against poverty; but their solutions were different. That was extended to their perspective of the international community as well.

Nehru, at home, believed in the role expected to be played by modern institutions—e.g., the party, Parliament, elections and so on, to enthuse a new spirit in India's social life. And yet, he cared for no violent snappings in his political ethos. And, as if seeking to forest all the fallibles of hypostatism and gullibilities of sub-democratism, Nehru worked as zealously for democratization of socialism as for decentralization of democracy. That perhaps, summed up Nehru's answer to the national crises and international stasis. Why, then, Gandhi and Nehru stayed together instead of repelling each other, should have been the author's primary occupation in dealing with the Dialogue.

—D.B. Mathur.

KING CANUTE'S 'COPTER MISSION (Contd. from Page 12)

B.M. Birla's lunch at Birla House at Woodlands in Alipore, McNamara met the big guns of Metal Box, India Steamship, Andrew Yule, Indian Iron & Steel, McLeod, Duncan Brothers, Jay Kays, Kanorias and ICI, and also a Director of the Bank of America.

The Birlas have been concerned at the growth of the Left in West Bengal and are worried that any future United Front Government here might take up seriously the prevailing country-wide clamour for action against this monopoly house. Therefore a large-scale American-financed project for Calcutta's development is very much in their interest, since through this US influence could

get a fresh lease in this part of the country.

It is to be noted that the Birla collaboration with Americans has strengthened considerably. The most impressive demonstration of this came only last week in Calcutta when General Motors Chief Roche came all the way from America to participate in the opening of the expansion plant of the nearby Hindustan Motors. For this function, the Birlas are reported to have spent the fantastic sum of Rs. 50 lakhs.

But the Birlas are not the only supplicants of the World Bank in West Bengal. It is learnt that Biren Mukherji could save himself from the Goenka bid to capture Indian Iron and Steel through the

quiet intervention of the World Bank, whose investments in this project are considerable. This is understandable since Sri T.T. Krishnamachari, the economic mentor of Goenka, has long been *persona non grata* with the World Bank because of his opposition to World Bank pressures during his tenure as Finance Minister.

On the whole, McNamara's Calcutta visit possibly marks a new dimension in US strategy in Asia after its Vietnam fiasco. Whether this too will turn out to be a King Canute futility, only the people of West Bengal will decide—not the Birlas or the Dharma Viras.

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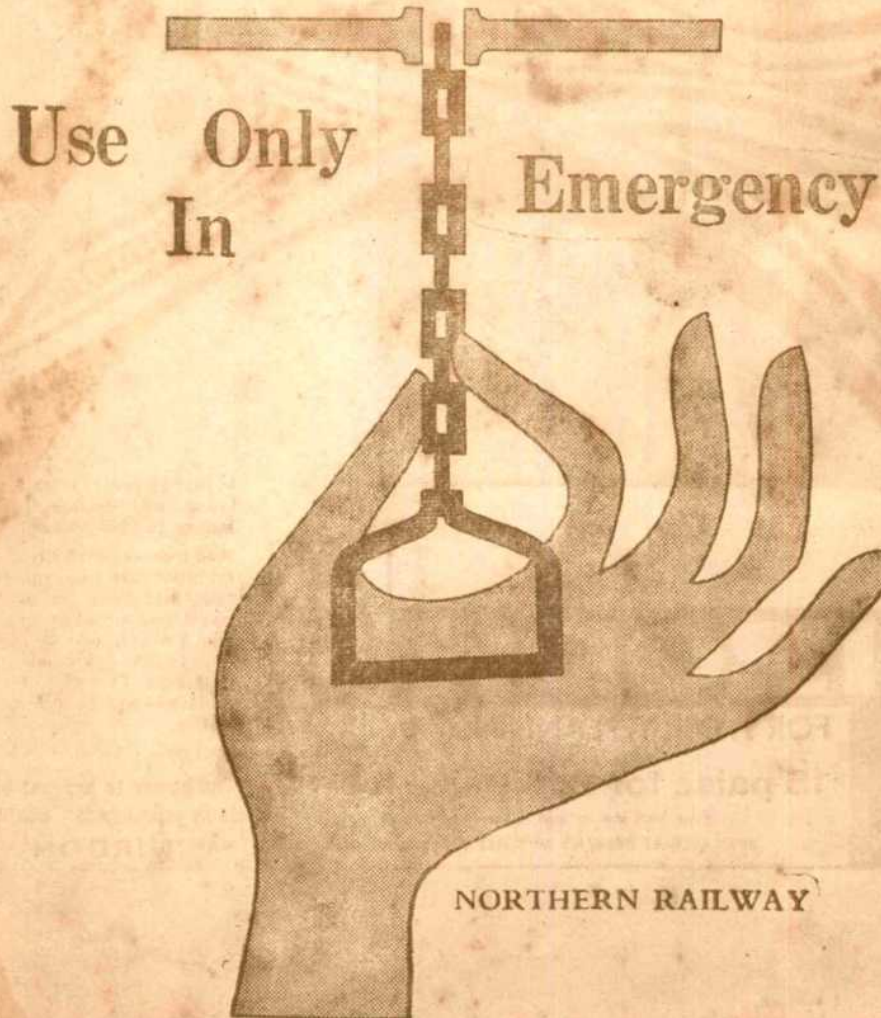
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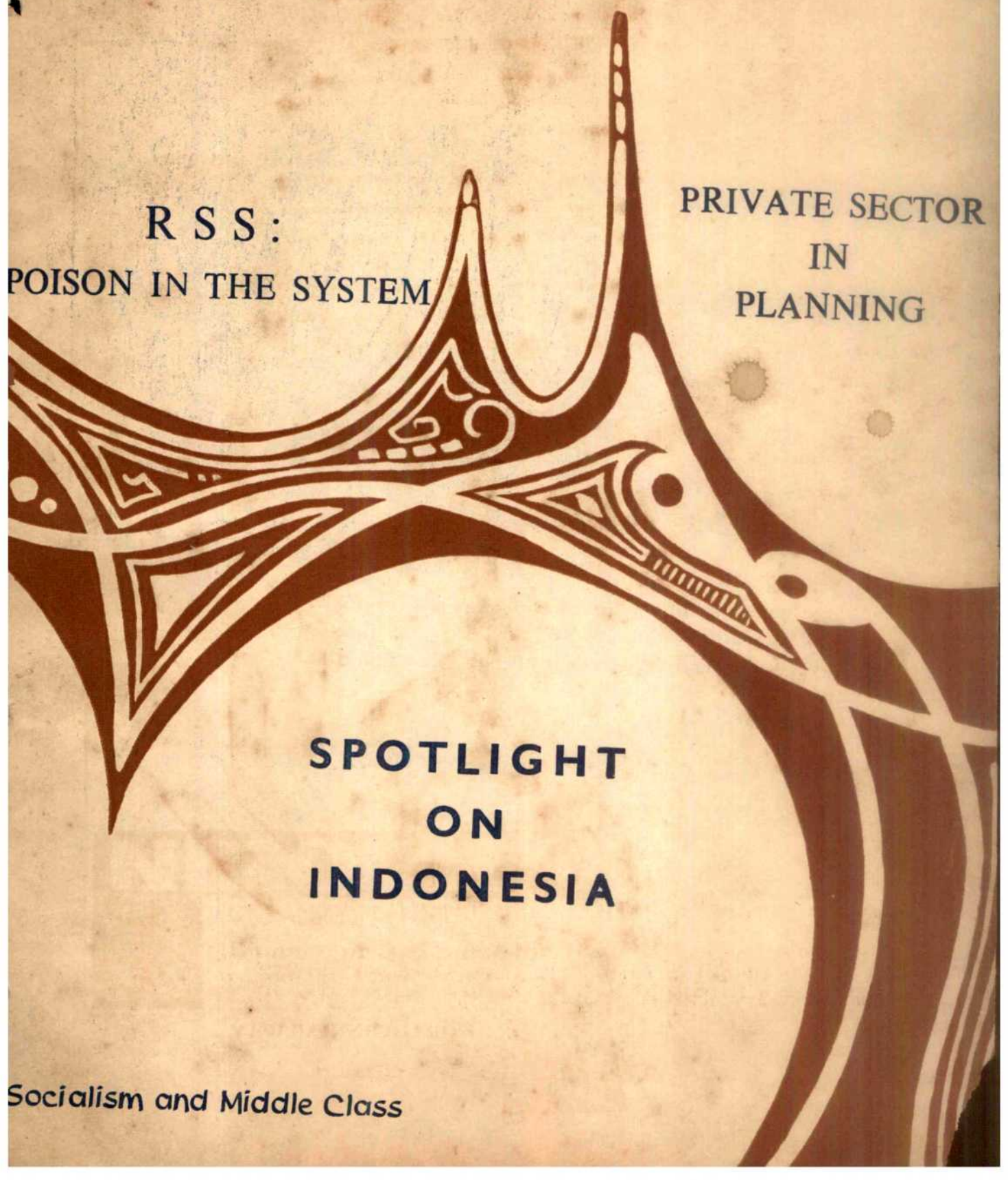
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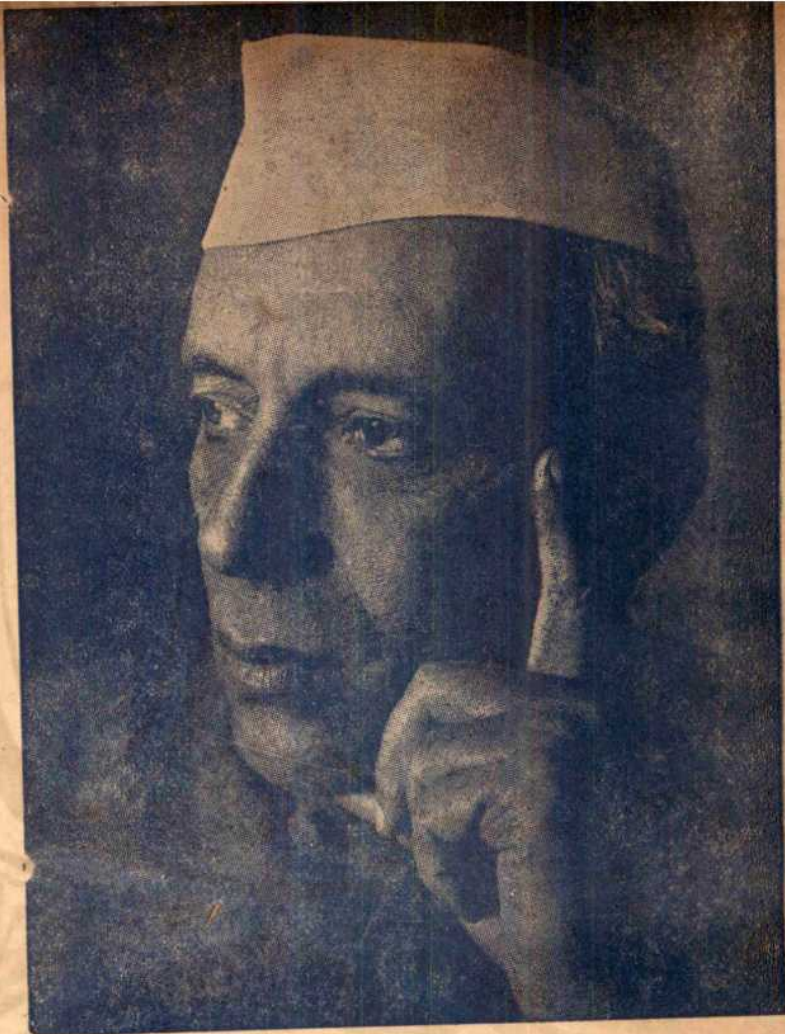
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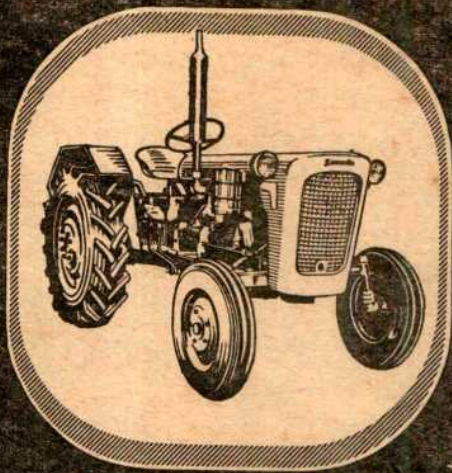


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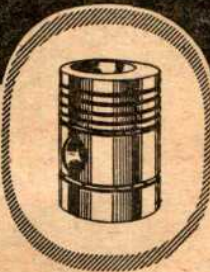
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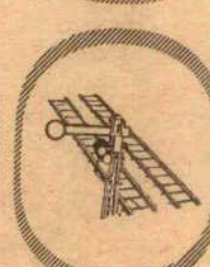
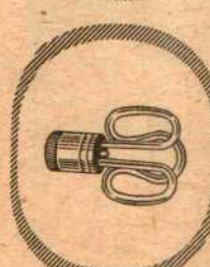
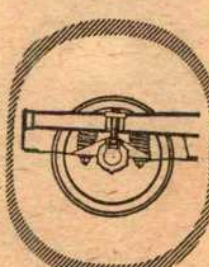
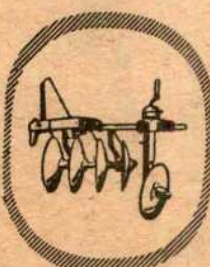
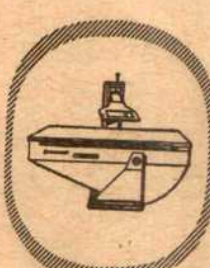
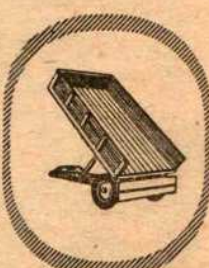
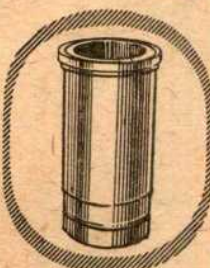
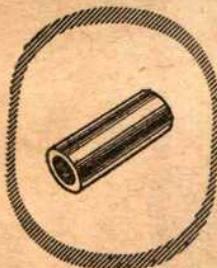
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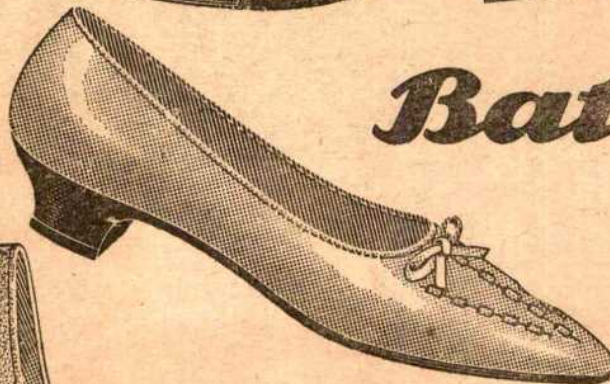
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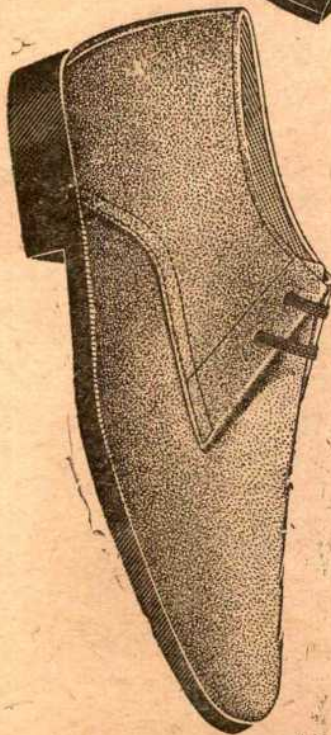
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RSS : POISON IN THE SYSTEM

INDUSTRIAL Development Minister Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed has rendered signal service by courageously naming the Jan Sangh and the RSS as the parties responsible for the communal tension in Ranchi and by acknowledging the work done by Sri K.D. Malaviya towards restoring communal harmony there. Sri Ahmed's statement in the Rajya Sabha is significant in the background of the Government's chronic reluctance to name publicly the groups seeking to perpetuate communalism in practically every sphere of life.

The happenings in Ranchi, where there was a deliberate attempt to terrorise Muslims and organize violence, have more than ordinary significance, for the attack was not merely one on the minority community but part of the vicious drive launched by vested interests against the public sector. Engineered communal violence was meant as much to make the minority community feel insecure as to discredit a major public sector project and make its working impossible. It was also meant to make things extremely difficult for Sri Malaviya whose faith in the philosophy of the public sector and determination to make the Heavy Engineering Corporation a success in economic and social terms are self-evident.

The communal gangs which invaded Ranchi and set about endangering the lives of the Muslims have raised a hue and cry against the steps taken by Sri Malaviya to generate a sense of security among minority community workers.

This has to be viewed as part of the systematic campaign of vilification that the Big Business press had been conducting against the HEC and its Chairman ever since Sri Malaviya took over. Neither the communalists nor the top industrialists in the private sector want the Corporation to succeed; they are allies in the cause of obstructing socialist construction, of which this public sector organisation headed not by the traditional bureaucrat but by a committed Leftist leader is a shining symbol. The way some of the Big Business newspapers consigned Sri Ahmed's statement in the Rajya Sabha to an insignificant corner is not without its sinister meaning

in this context. It does not suit their purpose to show Sri Malaviya in a good light or to publicise the fact that under him production in the HEC has increased by so much as 60 to 100 per cent in the different units.

However, Sri Ahmed's forthright statement in Parliament will not mean much unless what he has said represents a new and purposeful attitude on the part of the Union Government and the Congress Party. It is well known that in the last few years the RSS has widened its area of activity and has felt emboldened to carry on its communal propaganda without the least inhibition. Not long ago RSS chief Golwalkar addressed a big rally of his paramilitary set up right within the Union Territory of Delhi. There was little attempt to hide the communal purpose of the rally. Lesser lights of the RSS have consistently spoken in public about a "loyalty" test for Muslims and have elucidated the "Hindu Rashtra" theory of their boss.

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*Edited and Published by Nikhil Chakravartty for Perspective Publications Private Ltd. and printed by him at Navin Press, Subhash Marg, Delhi - 6
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The Jana Sangh is merely the political offshoot of the RSS, and it is no secret that RSS extremists hold key positions in the Jana Sangh. All talk about the Sangh being a different entity with its own programme and policy cannot fool anyone who knows that it is completely controlled by the RSS and cannot defy the RSS boss on basic issues.

The Government with its intelligence net work, is undoubtedly aware of the relationship between the RSS and the Jana Sangh and of the vast ramifications extending to sections of the private sector which buttress these two organisations. Yet there has been no effort on the part of our rulers to prevent communal mischief by these two organisations, and there is enough ground for suspecting that the RSS and the Sangh have friends and well-wishers in the ruling party and the bureaucracy who see to it that they come to no harm.

There is no other explanation for our rulers, who do not tire of holding forth eloquently on the need to uphold the secular values enshrined in the Constitution, turning the blind eye to the openly communal activities and propaganda of these organisations. The National Integration Council at its Srinagar meeting and its Standing Committee later on in Delhi outlined a programme of action to counter and neutralise the communal forces, but the Government is yet to think in terms of bold and swift action on those lines.

The alacrity the Home Ministry has shown in putting down the Government employees waging legitimate battle for their rights contrasts sharply with the patently harmful tolerance shown to the elements which are out to destroy the fabric of national integrity and unity and which at the same time are closely tied to vested interests in both the urban and rural sectors of the economy. While the Emergency lasted—a matter of five years—the extraordinary powers available to the Government were not used to prevent communal propaganda and the deliberate organisation of communal violence.

It is thus that the communal elements, led by the RSS and supported by the Jana Sangh, have been able to make inroads into many spheres of national life. They have infiltrated the administrative services

not excluding the law and order wing; this was borne out by the way police and other officials behaved at the time of communal rioting in places like Meerut.

They have invaded educational institutions with the aim of poisoning the atmosphere in the places of learning. The Banaras Hindu University provides the latest example. They have adherents among the teaching staff in several schools and colleges, and these are used to propagate anti-secular and anti-democratic ideas among the impressionable rising generation.

They have entered the trade union movement, too. In this field their purpose is to divide the workers in order to help the managements in the private sector. It will be remembered that when the employees of the Big Business newspapers were on strike demanding the implementation of wage awards, the mouth-piece of the Jana Sangh and RSS came out with an attack on the workers.

The role these elements played in respect of the token strike of the Government employees is recent enough to be remembered. It was not for nothing that Sri Chavan twitted the Jana Sangh by saying that while it sat with the Opposition its "soul" was with the Treasury Benches: this was said in the context of the attitude to the Government employees' strike—and by the person who earned much odium by resorting to strong-arm methods to crush the workers and break up their unions.

The question that arises is: Does Sri Ahmed's indictment of the Sangh and the RSS indicate awakening among our rulers, and will it mean a new policy of firmness in dealing with communal elements and the vested interests financing and encouraging them? Unless effective steps on these lines follow, Sri Ahmed's statement will mean exactly nothing. Nor is it much use showering praise on Sri Malaviya for his good work in this brief period in the HEC if this is not to be followed up with effective steps to put the entire public sector in the hands of dedicated socialists determined to make all the projects in this sector a success. Ranchi must prove a turning point if we are to take our rulers' professions about socialism, secularism and democracy seriously. The nation awaits the answer in clear and unambiguous action.

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PATIL'S BOYS AND GIRLS

THE isolation of Sri S.K. Patil's *chelas* and associates within the Congress Parliamentary Party became quite evident when not more than half a dozen angry but feeble voices were raised at the meeting of the party last week in protest against Shri Chandra Shekhar's charge that whenever an issue of economic reform was taken up these handful of persons came forward as defenders of the vested interests and functioned as the lobby of Big Business.

And the half a dozen who protested against Sri Chandra Shekhar's remarks were the same who had earlier in the party executive opposed the move to restore to Parliament its powers to amend property rights which have been, according to no less an authority than the present Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, mistakenly incorporated in the Fundamental Rights. These were the same members who had in the past opposed bank nationalisation, ban on Company donations, anti-monopoly measures, and demands for enquiry into the affairs of the Birlas.

They were also the loudest of Hindi chauvinists in the party who were responsible for giving the Bill to codify Jawaharlal Nehru's assurances to the non-Hindi speaking people such a shape that the assurances have been nullified. They were also in the forefront of moves to topple the non-Congress Governments and in demanding strong-arm methods in dealing with student agitations, workers struggles and the Central staff strike. In the field of foreign relations, they led the opposition to the Government of India's stand on the Czech crisis and

earlier on the Israeli aggression against the Arabs; they have also been agitating for the recognition of Formosa and for linking Indian defence system with the American strategy in South East Asia. They in fact want wholesale reversal of Indian foreign and domestic policies.

The Akbar Road group (as these few have come to be called after Sri S.K. Patil's residence) is sometimes able to confuse Congressmen by its Bhumihaar Socialism, as it was described, by a party MP last week. But on most occasions it is not able to cover up its anxiety to defend and promote the cause of the vested interests. This however does not mean that it always serves these interests; there are occasions when it becomes more loyal than the king, an example of which is provided by its opposition to Sri Nath Pai's bill. Surprisingly, none of the organs of Big Business has launched a campaign of the kind which the group has undertaken against the Bill. The reason is simple.

Whatever the Constitution might say and the judiciary might rule, in the final analysis rights are secured, kept and exercised by the power which the concerned interests wield in the social structure, and the vested interests know it. The freedom of speech, association and assembly guaranteed by the Constitution have been encroached upon by a number of legislative measures and executive actions which have mostly been upheld by the judiciary—not only because the Constitution itself accepts the theory of reasonable restrictions but also, and largely, because the democratic movement could not resist these encroach-

ments. Instances can also be cited showing that strong resistance by the people has at times compelled the Government to liberalise and even withdraw restrictions imposed upon them. The Central staff has been deprived of the right to strike and strike has itself been so redefined as to curb the basic rights of the workers (incidentally, the Akbar Road group which today expresses so much concern for democratic liberties has nothing to say about these curbs) but ultimately it will be the strength of the employees and the workers which will determine to what extent these curbs can be enforced.

Similarly, property rights have been amended thrice by Parliament and on two occasions in the past the Supreme Court has upheld these amendments but all the three amendments go in the interests of Big Business; these amendments not only enable the Government to introduce land reforms so essential for industrial development but also directly help industry by vesting in the Government various enabling powers. But when on one occasion the Government (Jawaharlal Nehru was still alive) wanted to get powers which would have affected the vested interests, it met with such resistance from them that it had to abandon the idea. If again the Government tries to upset or curb the vested interests by amending property rights when Parliament's power to amend Fundamental Rights is restored, it will not be allowed to do so. That is why Big Business and its organs are not worried about Sri Nath Pai's bill.

Thus the Akbar Road group

does not even represent fully the vested interests. It is only an instrument to serve the political interests of some disgruntled and ambitious politicians. At times these politicians are able to take advantage of the divisions in the Government—as they did on the question of bank nationalisation, company donations, the Czech crisis and on some other issues. But on the attitude towards Sri Nath Pal's Bill the Government is united and has the support of the majority of the party. Hence the isolation of the group to the extent that a junior member of the party can openly question the bona fides of the veterans who constitute the group and no one besides them protests. Not that the group did not try to create divisions in the Government as it has done on several occasions in the past.

The attempts of the disgruntled politicians behind the Akbar Road group, who are none other than the State bosses of the Congress constituting the hard core of the Syndicate, failed to exploit the divisions within the Government to their advantage largely because on every occasion they were either outmanoeuvred by the so-called Kitchen Cabinet or by the initiative of the Younger MPs, often described as the Young Turks, for radicalising policies frustrated their attempts. Indeed, every attempt made by the Syndicate with the Akbar Road group acting as its shock brigade to embarrass the Prime Minister, helped her to improve and even consolidate her position in the party with the result that the contenders for leadership in the Government now find that it is difficult to dislodge her.

However, in this game of manoeuvres and counter manoeuvres the Prime Minister has had to make policy concessions and also to give more powers to the contenders than either of them can hope to exercise even if one of them becomes Prime Minister. To be fair to the Prime Minister and the Kitchen Cabinet, these concessions in terms of policy and also power had to be given because of the pronounced assertion of its increasing power by Big Business through the agency of her two

rival contenders for leadership in the Government. In the process, the efforts made by the Young Turks for radicalisation of policies while helping the Prime Minister to improve and consolidate her position, have not led to the desired results, causing frustration among the Younger MPs.

This probably is in line with the Congress tradition of keeping the forces of reaction and of progress together and steering a middle course, using the pressure of the progressive forces to curb the forces of reaction but also giving concessions to them to contain them. But in the past the efforts of the Congress leadership to keep the two opposing forces together and charting out for the nation a centrist path often resulted in the imposition of curbs and the containment of the Right to enable a forward step to be taken. Now however the result is status quo which helps the forces of the Right to grow and retards the growth of the forces of progress. This is evident from the shifts in the interpretation of the accepted national policies despite the pressure of the Congress ranks for radicalisation.

It is because of the preference for status quo that the Fourth Plan cannot be prepared and the Centre and the States are unable to undertake mobilisation of internal resource. If the power of Big Business is reflected in the influence it exercise today in the formulation of policies, in its

demand on international capital to be accepted as its junior partner, and in its ambitions to expand its empire beyond the national frontiers, the inability of the Government to mop up newly created resources either in the rural sector or in the industrial sector for capital formation indicates the weakness of the Central leadership. This weakness cannot be covered up by indulging in efforts to topple the Kerala Government, expanding the powers of the CRP, creating new police forces like the Industrial Security Force (a new force called the Tourist Force is also being created) and depriving the people of democratic liberties. Nor can this weakness be covered up by the fiscal policies of Sri Morarji Desai which are aimed at freezing earnings of the common man without putting a ceiling on profits. Along with these measures which merely strengthen the power (not of the Government) of Big Business, resistance to politics and measures aimed at strengthening the forces of reaction is also growing of which any number of instances can be cited. In this confrontation a leadership which ultimately yields to the temptations of strongmanship, as it did on the issue of central staff, will not be able to retain its position unless it becomes more responsive to popular demands.

—G.M.

December 3

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The General and The Teutons

K. M. P.

THE new franc was the symbol of stability ; a devaluation of the franc would have meant devaluation of the General himself. De Gaulle is not the man to accept such a situation tamely ; for him it was an absurdity, and he does not like to deal in absurdities. There were the bankers in Zurich and Frankfurt who were insisting on a devaluation. To them devaluation is the only remedy for a financial crisis.

The franc has been under pressure since the spring fever of May shook France ; the wage increase and the proposed reforms in education and social services had their effect. The loss in production had affected the balance of trade and the speculators who make a profit out of the difficulties of other countries were banking on devaluation of the franc.

There was a run on the currency. Frenchmen who prefer to die for their country rather than lose any of their money started buying Deutsch Marks and Swiss francs when they could not lay their hands on gold. Within five months French gold and foreign exchange reserves were nearly halved ; but even after this France still has over 3000 millions worth of reserves. Yet, at the rate at which it was losing exchange, parity could not be maintained and something drastic had to be done.

The franc was not the only currency to be affected ; the pound sterling has been ailing for a long, long time, and nothing that the international bankers prescribed has succeeded in putting it in good health. Any change in the financial climate immediately affects it, and this time too, as the franc came under pressure, the pound wobbled. And when the pound is affected, the dollar too cannot escape. The French crisis therefore affected the entire Western world and it was expected that a devaluation of the franc would stave off the run on the pound and the dollar.

The decline in the power of the franc and the sterling was matched by a corresponding strengthening of the mark. Hot money flowed in mainly to West Germany because it was expected that the West German currency would be overvalued. At the moment, because the mark is under-valued, Bonn has been enjoying enormous favourable balances ; its reserves have increased by leaps and bounds, and the mark has become the strongest currency in West Europe. The speculators hoped to make a double kill—benefit from the devaluation of the franc and the revolution of the mark—and it was in this atmosphere that the financial experts and ministers met. West Germany immediately declared that it has

no intention of changing the value of the mark. Chancellor Kiesinger stated that no such change would take place while he was in office.

It was therefore expected that the only alternative was devaluation of the franc, and the committee of ten agreed to give France a credit of 2,000 million and the IMF another 1000 million dollars. This was in the expectation that France would devalue, but Paris had given no such undertaking and in the end the General decided to put up a last-ditch fight to save the franc rather than surrender to the international bankers.

The General preferred to impose hardship on the French people, cut his budget deficit into half and even give up temporarily his nuclear ambitions, but he refused the diktat of the bankers. The French economy is in a healthy condition : the difficulties are only temporary, and with export incentives and other measures he hopes that the franc will recover. The West Germans took measures to bring some stability to the finances of the Western world ; imports were made easier and various financial measures are expected to reduce West German trade surplus. Britain, as usual, followed ; imports were made difficult by the import deposit scheme, and taxes on consumption goods were raised to a higher level. Austerity was the order of the day. The re-

current financial crisis cannot, however, be met by such palliatives; a drastic reorganisation of the International monetary system is necessary, as De Gaulle suggested, if financial instability is to be overcome.

Behind the financial crisis is a major political crisis. With the weakening of the franc, the West Germans could now openly claim that they are the major power in Western Europe. Indeed, West German politicians eagerly proclaimed that with the financial crisis in France, they were now on top of the pecking order. The battle in which De Gaulle is now engaged is thus essentially a fight to maintain the pre-eminence of France. An economic decline would see West Germany take the first place. Already she is the most formidable economic power in Western Europe, and if she replaces France as the major political power the balance of power will drastically change.

Bonn has utilised the Czechoslovak crisis to its own advantage. Operation Seduction having failed, it has reverted to its old policy of force. It has exploited the events in Central Europe to strengthen the Nato and its own position within the alliance. The NATO alliance is up for renewal next year, and Bonn realised that the smaller nations cannot be expected to toe the line without an increase in tension. Moreover, it has always used tension to build up its military strength. It was during the cold war that the Bundeswehr was born, and the events in Central Europe were made an excuse for strengthening the West German military machine. Bonn had immediately declared that it would not sign the non-proliferation treaty, at least for the time being: its nuclear ambitions are well known, and it is therefore likely that it will do everything in its power to achieve nuclear status. Its immediate response was to increase its conventional strength; 33,000 officers and NCOs are to be recruited, a reserve of a million men is to be created, and 600 planes and helicopters acquired from the United States, and armour and artillery are to be strengthened. Bonn has

already the strongest conventional force in Western Europe, and the further increase in its military might will not be to the liking of its Western allies.

It is the re-emergence of West Germany as the most powerful nation in Western Europe that will cause concern to the world, for this reemergence is coupled with the growth of neo-Nazi and revanchist elements. The financial crisis and the NATO decisions are different facets of the same

picture—a Germany conscious of its strength and preparing to use its economic and political strength to become the dominant power in Europe. If this happens, there can be no place in Europe; the search for a European image in political and defence matters—another German aim—will make the Common Market an instrument of German policy. Hitler's New Europe will, it seems, be realised by Bonn with the blessings of Washington and London.

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PRIVATE SECTOR IN PLANNING

Two important events were recorded last week. One was a Seminar on Foreign Private Investments in India organised by the Indian Committee of the International Chambers of Commerce presided over by Sri L.N. Birla. The second was the discussion on the problems of formulating the New Fourth Plan—scheduled to be launched from April next year—in the Union Cabinet and in the Standing Committee of the National Development Council which includes the Chief Ministers and the representatives of all the State Governments under the chairmanship of the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission. The outcome of both these events gives significant indications of the likely direction of economic policy and developments in the country now that economic activity is at last picking up and we can expect a measure of economic growth after the prolonged stagnation of the last three years.

The Planning Commission presented to the Union Cabinet and later to the Standing Committee of the NDC what it thought should be the basic parameters of the new Plan and what precise responsibilities the Government leadership at the Centre and in the States should clearly and unequivocally accept if the Fourth Plan was intended to be meaningful and become a worthwhile instrument of economic growth. The proposals of the Planning Commission in this context have been widely reported. They are based on the objective of a 5 to 6 per cent growth rate in the next five-year period which had been endorsed together with the policy approach to planning

outlined by the Commission at a full session of National Development Council several months ago.

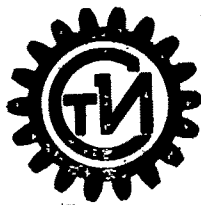
To achieve the agreed objectives, the Planning Commission after laborious and extensive discussions at all levels and statistical exercises within the Commission had proposed that a plan size of Rs. 15,000 crores in the public sector would be necessary—with an outlay of Rs 8,500 crores in the Central sphere and Rs 6,500 crores in the State sphere. To be able to finance these outlays, the Planning Commission further proposed that the Centre should give plan assistance of Rs 3,500 crores to the States in the next five years (to be distributed on the basis of criteria evolved by the Chief Ministers themselves) and should raise additional resources of Rs 2,500 crores in this period. The State Government additional resource raising effort was put at Rs 1,500 crores.

To arrive at these proposals, the Planning Commission had assumed that the defence expenditure in the five-year period will not increase beyond the present levels—already considered by it to be quite a strain on the economy—and will be of the order of Rs 5,100 crores. It had also assumed that the price line would be held during the plan period so that the non-plan and administrative expenditure would not eat into the plan resources as had happened during the closing years of the Third Plan and during the last three years. It considered all this to be feasible provided policy approaches outlined by it and accepted by the NDC were to be consistently followed. As regards the objective of reducing the net inflow

of foreign aid to half the present levels, its proposals now envisaged even a larger reduction in view of the growing difficulties of getting foreign aid and related this objective more clearly with the structure of proposed Plan investments and the target of 7 per cent increase in exports.

At the full meeting of the Planning Commission early in November which was attended by the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister the proposals of the Planning Commission were forcefully explained by the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission. It was then decided that these proposals should be considered by the Union Cabinet and the Standing Committee of the NDC so that the governmental authority should take clear-cut decisions on them and accept firm commitments. Once that was done the Planning Commission could feel free and able to go ahead with the work of formulating the outline of the new Fourth Plan and place it before the full session of the National Development Council some time in January. The decision of the full meeting of the Planning Commission had given confidence and hope that the work of plan making and then launching it on the scheduled time was now seriously in hand and would be carried out. But such confidence and hope have subsequently turned out to be misplaced.

Both at the Cabinet and at the Standing Committee of the NDC, the Planning Commission and its Deputy Chairman found themselves before a government leadership totally oblivious of its responsibilities, unwilling to take any commitment and actually raising fresh hurdles in the way

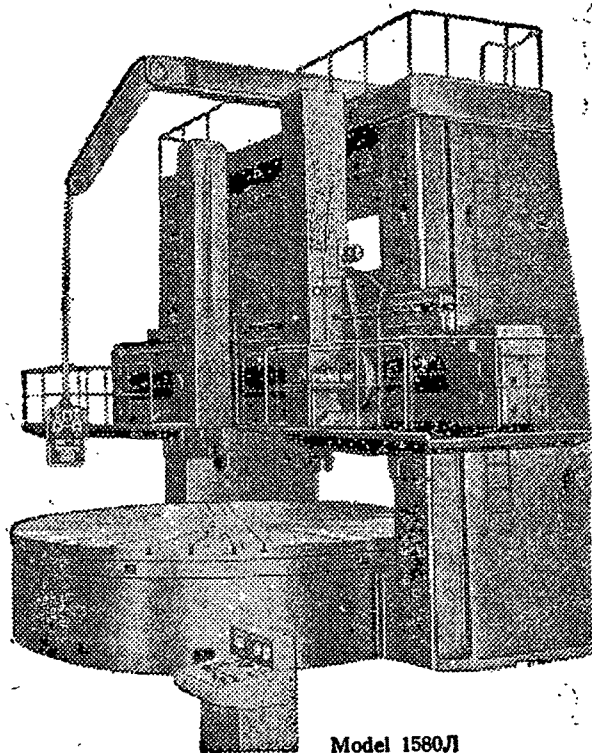


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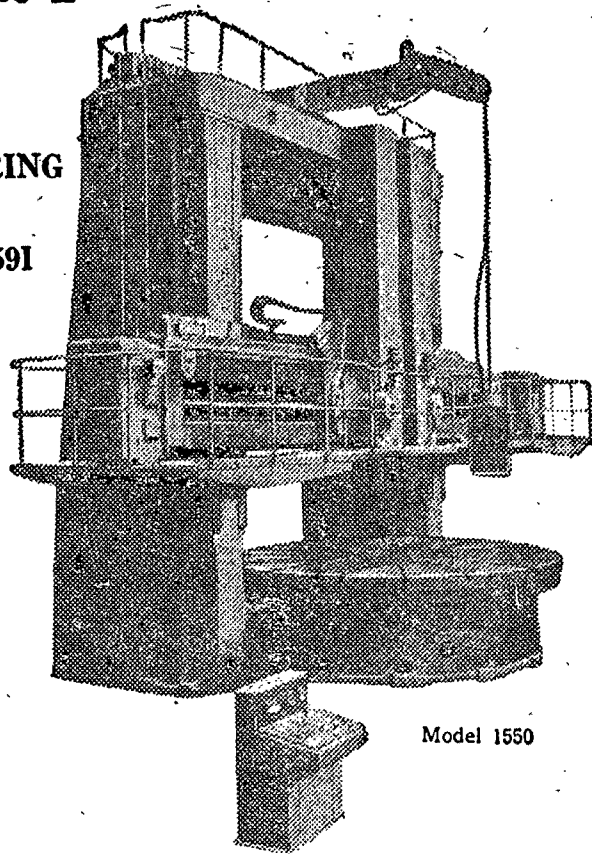
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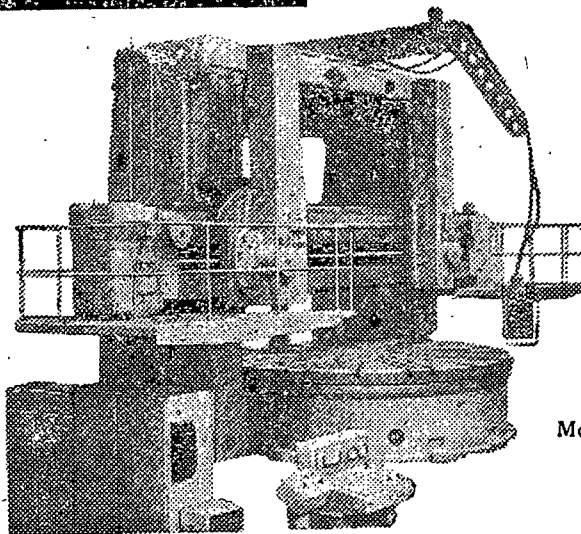
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of any decision being taken. Neither of the two bodies accepted the commitment to raise resources. But the demands for larger outlays for areas under their respective charges were plenty. What took place was a disgusting game of passing the buck of responsibility back and forth with the Planning Commission left with nothing to hold on to for its work of plan making. At the Cabinet meeting, the entire discussion was reduced to unreality by the announcement of the Defence Minister that he would require an additional defence outlay of Rs. 1000 crores over and above what the Planning Commission had assumed. The Chief Minister's refusal to even consider the levy of Agricultural Income Tax which is estimated to bring in an additional revenue of Rs. 600 crores in the State sector during the plan period only completed the process. The Central cabinet thought it a very clever move to postpone taking of any decision and to invite the State Chief Ministers to commit themselves to additional raising effort first. It merely fixed in advance the total Central assistance to the State for the Plan. The Chief Ministers refused to be taken in by such a questionable move and insisted on Centre discussing with them the question of Plan assistance and resources. The entire exercise of consulting and securing endorsement for its plan making effort by the Planning Commission thus proved to be totally abortive.

With his usual equanimity, Dr. Gadgil is still willing to wait for the government leadership to make up its mind in the next few weeks. He expects both the Central cabinet and the State Chief Ministers to inform him during the course of this month what their exact intentions are. He has even hinted that in the event of commitments to raise resources as proposed by the Commission not being accepted and the required resource raising effort being scaled down, the public-sector part of the Plan would shrink to the same extent. The reduction of the size of the plan in the public sector in this manner will have its own implications and repercussions, and it is to be

expected that the planning Commission will spell them out clearly and without ambiguity. A rate of growth of upto 6 per cent in that event will certainly become impossible and this, together with unproductive expenditure on defence and other sectors going up and key investments held up, will also have serious adverse impact on the price situation as well as the employment situation. The entire scheme of the Planning Commission will then lose its vitality as well as viability. In fact, the planning process, even if a pretence of a plan is finally drawn up, will no longer be an instrument of development but acceptance of stagnation and the beginning of a rapid change in the direction of our economic situation entirely different from what planning had implied when it was first launched.

How exactly the Planning Commission under Dr. Gadgil's leadership will behave in such a situation is difficult to say. Will it take the people into confidence and spell out all the implications of government leadership's failure at this crucial stage? Or, will it play along with the Government to cover up this failure by all sorts of political trickery? The answer to these questions will be known in the coming two months when the full session of the National Development Council is at last convened towards the end of January to consider the draft outline of the new Fourth Plan or of whatever is left of it. But it is quite easy to guess that on the part of the Government an attempt will surely be made to confuse the situation and maintain the pretence of planning, even if there will in fact be no intention to undertake planned development. For the present Government has to do so as a political expediency itself and can not come out in the open to scrap planning formally even if voices are already heard in the ruling circles to postpone the Five Year Plan for another year as was quite explicitly done by the Chief Ministers of Maharashtra and Mysore at the Standing Committee of the NDC.

The most favoured means of

keeping up the pretence of planning even while it is all but given up is to formulate a plan in which the share of the public sector and private sector outlays will be radically and sharply altered in favour of the private sector but the overall size of the plan will be maintained at a respectable figure not far different from the outline of the now defunct Fourth Plan. In the Planning Commission's present scheme, the public sector outlay is proposed to be Rs 15,000 crores while the private sector outlay is envisaged to be Rs 7,000 to 8,000 crores. Again, in its scheme, the Planning Commission does not outline very specifically the nature and direction of the private sector outlays and programmes. So far the private sector outlay of the Plan is concerned it is going to be frankly indicative, with no firm targets fixed on finances guaranteed. Since licensing system and economic controls are to be greatly relaxed and private initiative is proposed to be allowed full play, it would be pointless to make any detailed plan for the private sector. This would be quite in order if the public sector maintains a commanding position in the planning process. However, in the present situation, where the more specifically worked out and planned public sector outlays and programme are likely to be drastically pruned, any attempt to maintain the overall size of the Plan will not only mean a larger field for the private sector to operate in but to make the weight of the indicative plan to be decisive in the entire planning process. In fact, it will be merely a political move to assert that planning is not given up though in fact it would be so.

This possible switch over in favour of the private sector in the so-called planning which will be inevitable in view of the reluctance of the governmental leadership to raise resources for the public sector outlay, makes the last week's Seminar on Foreign Private Investment so very important. That the entire central government leadership and high officials concerned with economic affairs took so active and pro-

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Socialism and Colonial Middle Class

GANESH PRASAD

A strong middle class is a bulwark against socialism and social revolution. A frustrated middle class may become the backbone of reaction and fascism. The frustrated colonial middle class of the post-Versailles period became the herald of socialism and advocate of social revolution in colonies. It was the hard school of patriotism that drove this class in colonies to adopt the socialist philosophy, strategy and tactics. The adoption of this philosophy, which is primarily of the masses, was not without reluctance. In fact, the colonial nationalism and its leadership, which was mainly middle class, advanced towards socialism as "painfully" and "step by step" as did Jawaharlal Nehru, the representative and spokesman of this movement and class during the thirties.

India is a bundle of centuries ; its middle class is a bundle of paradoxes. Economically non-productive, this class was culturally quite productive. Socially isolated, it led the society towards modernity. Mostly leisured and in some cases even parasitic, it was libertarian and led movements of social and political emancipation. Proud of the nation's past, it became the carrier of the latest externals of an alien culture. Standing at cross-roads, it advocated retention of the old and at the same time assimilation of the new and the alien. Nehru called it a "derelict" class of a "derelict" nation (*The Discovery of India*). Lord Lytton once wrote

Dr. Ganesh Prasad presented this table at a seminar on socialism organised by Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi on November 30.

in a letter to Lord Salisbury, in 1876 that the members of this class "really represent nothing but the social anomaly of their own position." (Quoted in Shankar Ghose : *The Western Impact on Indian Politics*, Calcutta, 1967, p. 43.) With its study of British empirical and realistic literature, this class was highly utopian and unrealistic. Eclectic in its mode of thinking and living, it dreamt of showing the right path to the suffering humanity.

It was this class that became the harbinger of modern India and the leader of the Indian Renaissance and Nationalism. It was anti-medieval, anti-tradition, humanistic, individualistic, acquisitive, competitive, libertarian and modernist. By its social position and inherent individualism it avoided the technique of mass movement till it was forced by the compulsions of the freedom struggle. A.O. Hume's fear of the recrudescence of a Mutiny in 1885 was more an expression of bureaucratic apprehension than of social reality. Not that the poor did not register their open protest against foreign rule and exploitation. Professor Hiren Mukherjee has shown that there had been local, spontaneous and sporadic peasant uprisings against the British rule right since its beginning. (See his *Indian Struggles for Freedom*). But besides other things, the enlightened middle class because of its social position failed to organize and lead a nation-wide anti-imperialist mass struggle for quite a long time. In a way, the progress of the progress of the middle class political experience and maturity.

The Indian middle class lived in the world of magic. The first

political magic was that of representative institutions. The early patriots viewed the Indian connection with Britain as a providential gift. Hence the major premise of their thinking was the Providential Theory. The establishment of representative institutions was viewed as the panacea for all ills. The mentality and aspiration of this smug class are best represented by the outlook and words of Surendra Nath Banerjee, one of the pioneers of political agitation and education. In the Congress presidential address (1895) he asserted that it stood for representative institutions of a modified character, not for the masses, but for the educated "who by reason of their culture and enlightenment, their association with English ideas, and their familiarity with the English method of government might be presumed to be qualified for such a boon." The elite considered itself to be the interpreter of the wishes of the nation and its millions. The ideal political arrangement was one in which the policies of the administration were in accordance with the wishes of the people. This was possible if these interpreters were given sufficient facilities through representative institutions to influence the policies and actions of the Establishment. On their part the interpreters were to exhibit their competence before the "fair-minded" and "justice loving" English people, as Naoroji called them.

Soon the magic of bomb began to bewitch the frustrated patriots. The use of bomb by the Russian Nihilists had, so thought Balgangadhar Tilak, forced the Czar to concede the Duma to the people. The elite was expected to act a heroic role before the

nation and the people. The Lokamanya, "the real symbol of the new age" (Nehru : *The Discovery of India*) that began with the Partition of Bengal (1905), had advised (1896) the patriots to follow the Machiavellian ethics as practised by great ones like Shivaji and Cromwell. This arch-patriot ended his *magnum opus*, the *Gita Rahasya*, with a prayer to God that "there should come to birth again in this country such noble and pure men as will worship" Him in accordance with "the equable and brilliant religion of the Gita", that is, with "Devotion, Spiritual Knowledge, and Energism". The heroic deeds and sacrifice of the terrorist patriots stirred the masses. They became the idols of the nation. Nationalism did gain in popularity but not ideologically.

Neither the school of interpretation nor that of heroism could contain the anger, frustration and discontent that enveloped the nation at the end of the World War I. The middle class, the intelligentsia, who might have acted as beacon-lights in the atmosphere of humiliation, anger and darkness "were themselves submerged in this all-pervading gloom." They were like "derelicts, frantically seeking some foothold of security for body and mind and finding none, they floated aimlessly in the murky waters of Indian life." (Nehru : *The Discovery of India*). Therein came the magic of Satyagraha as a solvent, a beacon-light, a great relief. "Here at least was a way out of the tangle, a method of action which was straight and open and possibly effective." (*Ibid*) Nehru, the Descartes of Indian politics, was "afire with enthusiasm." Such was the hypnotic influence of the new magic.

Representative of the People

Imbued with the spirit of *Aparigraha*, fearlessness and moral courage, the Satyagrahi was a unique phenomenon. He combined the qualities of an interpreter and a hero. Yet he was different from the Moderate's interpreter and the Extremist's hero. He was something more. The Satyagrahi hero was a representative of

the people. Again, he was a peculiar representative. He was to identify himself with the people. For this purpose devoted and selfless service of the people was an essential pre-requisite. This was in line with the tradition of the Ramakrishna Mission and the Servants of India Society. Further, identification implied living almost as unsophisticated a life as that of the peasant. Gandhi brought the urban patriotic elite in close touch with the vast humanity that lived in villages. The Satyagrahi received co-operation and abundant sympathy of the rural poor. The message of nationalism spread like wild fire throughout the land. The practice of pilgrimage to goal dispelled the moral fear that was, according to the Tilak School, the chief basis of strength of the alien rulers.

Gandhism and Marxism

Such was the singular service rendered by Gandhism. Yet the school of representation too proved inadequate. In the thirties the magic of Marx challenged the magic of the Mahatma. Already in the twenties some patriots had come to Marxism, near-Marxism, or romantic socialism. It was mainly through Nehru, so acknowledges E.M.S. Namboodiripad, that "the impact of socialism was felt inside the Congress." Namboodiripad; *Economics and Politics of India's Socialist Pattern*. His advance towards socialism makes an interesting study. It involved five steps and each step was an outcome of cold-blooded rationalism and empiricism. A few other veteran patriots, like Acharya Narendra Deva, too passed through almost a similar process. In 1918 Gandhism had "removed the scales" from the eyes of Nehru and others. (Nehru : *An Autobiography*) A decade later Marxism "lightened up many a dark corner" of his mind. (*ibid*). In the early thirties behind the cells of imperialist goals and in the conditions of family worries Marxism was his dearest possession and sustainer. Above all, it was a telescope with which he could see the distant past and

distant lands. Outside goals he trumpeted the discovery of this telescope and thereby became the greatest non-Marxist salesman of Marxism. Nehru was the Fabian Society of India and of the colonial world.

Both by its failure as well as by its success Gandhim paved the way for the hearty reception of socialism by the Indian middle class. The inadequacy of the Satyagraha technique had led to the birth and revival of the Swaraj Party, the rise of Kisan and Youth organisations mostly independent of the Congress, and the recrudescence of terrorism. Gandhism proved ineffective to meet the challenge of Reaction, secular as well as religious. Above all, the disorderly withdrawal of the Second Civil Disobedience movement forced the progressive patriots to make a frantic search for a more effective and positive philosophy and technique. This led to the discovery of Marxism. It became an anchorage to the middle class patriot seething with frustration and anger. The strategy and tactics of the national struggle were divided into two. In matters of organisation they were to be Marxian or socialistic, while in actual bout with the imperialism they were to remain Gandhian. In terms of classes, the Congress was to be a mass organisation under bourgeois leadership.

Success of Gandhism

The major success of Gandhism lay in the creation of healthy and humanistic atmosphere. Under Gandhi's leadership some vital humanist virtues and ideals came to stay in the nation's public life either as expedients or creed. These were non-violence, truth, peace, racial brotherhood, nobility of means, and service of the poor and the downtrodden. These were antithesis of Fascism that menaced the world in the thirties and forties. By its social and natural propensity a frustrated middle class is, as the colonial one is, prone to line up behind the fascist reaction. The Indian middle class was saved from this calumny. Negatively, the Gandhian climate diverted it

from its natural inclination. Positively, a congenial background existed for hearty welcome of Tagore's condemnation of the world reaction and praise of the Soviet humanistic achievements. Above all, the voice of Nehru, the youngest member of the Trinity that symbolized modern India, could be effective in the colonial world. His Marxist analysis of the world forces removed confusion, made the patriots internationally mined and equipped nationalism with correct, straight and progressive line even at times of crises. Through his liberal Marxism the colonial nationalism learned that Imperialism and Fascism were blood-brothers, that at bottom the Anglo-French imperialists were friends of the fascist reaction, that the world was divided into two camps—reactionary and progressive, and that the rightful place of the colonial nationalism was in the progressive camp.

Nationalism and Socialism

Nationalism is primarily a middle-class phenomenon; socialism is a proletarian one. The colonial nationalism was ideologically influenced mainly by the humanist-liberal tradition of the post-French Revolution age. Like the latter, it could not have a revolutionary and rational norm. It remained a negative, vague and emotional creed. Consequently, the middle class patriot invented irrational norms like Mother Kali, Durga, Pan-Islamism, Khilafat and Ram Raj. The word "Swaraj" became a contentless ideal. The result was that all sorts of frissiparous tendencies menaced the growth of healthy nationalism. "My mind was befogged, and no clear path was visible", recorded the Cartesian Nehru before his departure to Europe early in 1926. (*ibid*). Contact with socialist movements, thought and experiment brought home the urgent necessity of equipping nationalism with a rational and positive ideal. To this end he struggled incessantly till the end of his life. His "clear path" in the thirties influenced the thinking of other patriots who too had found their minds "be-

fogged". In fact, after the Russian Revolution wherever the achievement of national independence was delayed—and it was delayed everywhere—the struggle for political independence became more and more socialist-oriented in order to strengthen it by drawing in board masses. So the middle-class nationalism could have a rational and revolutionary norm only by its marriage with the proletarian socialism.

Nehruism symbolized the above marriage. It was the meaning of the Russian Revolution to the Indian middle class and to the colonial one. By the mid-thirties after three major bouts against British Imperialism (1921, 1930-31, 1932-33) the overconfidence of this class in its capacity to attain national independence almost single handed and in the efficacy of its tactics and strategy of struggle was fully shaken. Pessimism, the worst curse for a struggling and progressive class, reigned supreme in the nationalist camp. Now the nationalist was eager to learn from other people's experiences and to understand the changing world scene. Herein came Nehruism and, following it, the whole Left movement. They brought the knowledge of other lands, especially of the Soviet Union, to the doors of the nationalists and the common man. The kernel of Nehruism was Faith in Progress and Faith in People. It put forth in liberal and nationalist language the central thesis of Marxism and the Communist International that the capitalism, imperialism, fascism, and militarism were decaying and organically connected phenomena and that the future belonged to the other organically connected phenomena representing progressive forces of the world. These progressive forces included socialism, colonial nationalism and the Soviet Union. Such a world picture restored confidence to the frustrated, sceptic and struggling middle class nationalist.

The story of the achievements of the Soviet people had a tremendous impact on the thinking of the middle class nationalist. The influence of the Soviet

experiment on the colonial patriot can best be judged by Nehru's book *Soviet Russia* based on four days visit to Russia and the septuagenarian Tagore's *Letters from Russia*. By the method of disguise or googly method it was brought home to the colonial patriot that given socialist system, the ills that engulfed the life and dwarfed the growth of the colonials, including their petty bourgeois section, could be easily cured. This fostered study of Marxist literature. Perhaps the British sense of humour made the bureaucracy proscribe this literature for free citizens and at the same time prescribe it for the detenus. The logic of patriotism, however, produced the same effect. The study injected confidence in the elite. Many a mental riddle was solved. History, society, economy, life, phases of nationalism, happenings on the world scene came to have new meanings. A clear understanding of these phenomena became quite possible. About all, the people came to have a new meaning for the petty bourgeoisie. The middle class patriot became a socialist hero—quite different from a parliamentary hero, a terrorist hero or a Satyagrahi hero. He went to his people, fraternized with them, organised them, injected confidence in them and led them. Thereby, he became a real interpreter, a real hero, a real representative.

Trade Union Movement

The trade union movement had a long history. A potential section of it was radical and socialist. The peasants were also astir. Their Kisan Sabhas went on multiplying in the twenties and more so in the thirties. In 1929 Nehru was the President of the National Congress as well as of the All-India Trade Union Congress. At that time he emphasized that the National Congress should become more socialistic and more proletarianized and the organized labour should be more active in the national struggle for freedom (*ibid*). The time was not propitious. Besides the sectarian outlook of the Communist

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Some Lessons of Indonesian Events

A. BELENKY AND B. ILYICHEV

As a result of the events in Indonesia in the autumn of 1965 the Communist Party of Indonesia (CPI) was subjected to cruel repressions and the majority of its leaders and active workers either put to death without investigation or trial or thrown into prison or concentration camps where they are confined to this day.

How was it possible for a Party with over three million members and controlling mass organisations totalling 16 million members, to suffer such a serious defeat and to prove unable to repulse the reactionary forces? In order to reply to this question, we must go back to the time when the conditions began to appear, which subsequently led to the reactionary coup in the country.

I

By the fifties the young Indonesian State found itself faced with the choice of either developing and intensifying the national-liberation revolution of 1945, to follow the road of strengthening political, and winning economic, independence; or, limiting itself to what had already been attained, preserving the economic dependence upon foreign capital and close political relations with the West. For a number of years this question was the subject of sharp conflicts between the progressive forces of the nation and the internal reaction. In 1957, when the struggle was at its height, Sukarno, then President of the country, proclaimed the concept of a so-called "Guided Democracy" which, according to his idea, was to replace the parliamentary democracy of the Western type that had wholly compromised itself in Indonesia. Sukarno considered that at that stage of development of Indonesia, all the political parties should give up their "narrow Party" interests and concentrate their activities on fulfilling the general national tasks.

The transition to the new regime was legalised by revival of the Constitution of 1945, that had granted the President extensive extraordinary powers, by dissolution of the elected Parliament and its replacement by an appointed one, and by proclaiming Sukarno President for life. The activities of the parties were put under strict control, strikes were prohibited, meetings and demonstrations could only be held with the permission of the military

authorities. The abolition of the bourgeois parliamentary democracy and the strengthening of the President's personal powers took place in a complicated, and tense situation when the leaders of the Right-wing Moslem Masjumi Party and the pro-Western Socialist Party (PSI), jointly with the reactionary elements in the armed forces, were organising anti-government separatist rebellions, and when the conflict with the Netherlands about Western Irian had become extremely acute. In so far as the "Guided Democracy" was introduced under the slogan of struggle against imperialism and reaction and was accompanied by suppression of the rebellions, banning of the anti-national Masjumi and PSI the nationalisation of the Dutch capitalists' property and the proclamation of an agrarian reform, the negative aspects of the regime of "Guided Democracy" remained in the background and were not immediately noticed by the progressive forces. Gradually, however, they became more and more obvious, primarily in the economic field.

Signs of crises began to make themselves more and more strongly and clearly felt in the Indonesian economy. The eight-year plan for economic development (1961-1969) fell through; agriculture proved incapable of providing food for the rapidly growing population and food products had to be imported from foreign countries with the spending of precious currency. Unprecedented inflation began in the country, prices steadily soared. Over 1958-1965 alone, the cost of living rose 68-fold in Djakarta. The living standards of the working class and other strata of the urban population steadily deteriorated, unemployment became more and more general. The peasants suffered from land-hunger (up to 60 per cent of the peasants in Java had no land at all), from feudal survivals and exploitation by the money-lenders. No agrarian reform was actually implemented. The three-year programme of ensuring food and clothing for the population, announced by the Government in 1959, was not carried out. The people were deprived of all opportunities of fighting for their rights and interests.

Against the background of the increasing poverty of the masses there stood out in ever stronger relief the luxury of the higher classes of society, in particular, the new parasitic elite who were gradually gaining control over the economic and political life of the country. This civilian and military bureaucracy that was turning bourgeois pocketed the profits of the state enterprises under their

This article appeared in the Soviet Communist Party's theoretical organ, Kommunist (No. 15, 1968).

control, the number of which had greatly increased as a result of the nationalisation of Dutch enterprises and the establishment of state control over the enterprises, banks and plantations of other Western powers. The new rich purchased on favourable terms many confiscated enterprises, bought up land, houses, gold, foreign currency, and transferred their own capital abroad.

Seeking to divert the attention of the masses from the internal difficulties, the Indonesian ruling circles stepped up tension in the sphere of foreign affairs. The appearance of adventuristic gambles in Indonesia's foreign policy in the sixties was greatly encouraged by the growing influence of the Peking leaders on Sukarno and his followers. Rejecting the former line of an independent and active foreign policy, Sukarno announced the establishment of the "Peking-Djakarta axis", pursued a course practically designed to weaken the co-operation with the USSR and other Socialist countries. Under the influence of Mao Tse-tung's splitting group, the policy of the Indonesian leading circles began to coincide more and more with the anti-Soviet line of Peking, breaking with the general anti-imperialist front of the newly-free countries, with the Afro-Asian solidarity movement. A number of hegemonic nationalistic demands was advanced. As soon as the question of Western Irian was settled, the useless and noisy "confrontation" with Malaysia began, which demanded tremendous military expenditure and caused great losses to the Indonesian economy.

What attitude did the Communist Party take towards the strengthening of Sukarno's personal power, to the "Guided Democracy", to the new foreign policy, towards which the Indonesian rulers were inclining more and more?

In 1954, the CPI adopted a Marxist-Leninist programme showing the prospects for the creation of a united national anti-imperialist front with the aim of isolating the Right-wing forces, striving to satisfy the vital needs of the population and to attract the latter to the side of socialism. The influence of the CPI increased, as was shown by its success in the elections to the Parliament and the Constituent Assembly in 1955 (more than six million votes and fourth place among the parties) and, in particular, to the local representative bodies in 1957-1958 (over eight million votes and first place).

By supporting without any serious reservations the policy of "Guided Democracy", the leadership of the CPI hoped that the setting up of a government of "gotong-rojong" (mutual co-operation), as promised by Sukarno, with the participation of the Communists, might prove to be a step towards the further consolidation of the Party's position in the country. However, Sukarno's conception of "NASAKOM" (co-operation of nationalist, religious and Communist forces) proved to be impracticable and the participation of the Communists in the government—purely nominal. On July 8, 1960, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPI published a statement criticising certain aspects of the Government's policy (rise of prices and taxes, refusal to fight the

bureaucratic bourgeoisie, application of the law on a state of emergency against the workers, etc.). The statement emphasized the complete loyalty of the CPI to Sukarno, it only criticised the actions of some ministers; but nevertheless the Government replied to the criticism by arresting the leaders of the Communist Party and closing down its newspapers.

The leaders of the CPI were faced with the alternative of either struggling more resolutely for the people's interests, which would inevitably have led to a conflict with Sukarno, or of adhering to the line of unity with the President. They elected the road of a still closer union with Sukarno, calculating thus to preserve and strengthen the position of the Party.

The unreserved support and exaltation of Sukarno by the leadership of the Communist Party, the education in this spirit of the whole of the three million Party members, chiefly of peasant stock, gradually led to the ideological disarming of the CPI, to slipping down from class positions, to replacement of proletarian slogans by petty-bourgeois nationalistic ones. This was manifested particularly graphically in the decisions of the Seventh Extraordinary Congress of the CPI (April 1962), which included in the Party Rules clauses adopting Sukarno's principles of the Pancha Shila and also proclaimed Sukarno's Political Manifesto (1959) as its second programme. The leaders of the CPI called upon Communists to "subordinate class interests to national ones" obviously going over from the positions of Marxism-Leninism to positions of nationalism. Sukarno, in his turn, gladly agreed to a rapprochement with the CPI which he needed to counterbalance the army command so that, balancing between these two basic political forces of the country, he might retain his personal power.

The armed forces have always played a relatively independent role in the public life of Indonesia, and in the period of the "Guided Democracy" they were officially recognised as a special political group and their representatives were included in all state bodies. The position of the army command in all sections of the state machinery was strengthened to a considerable extent by the state of martial law which existed in the country from March 1957 and which gradually led to the establishment of a military dictatorship.

A situation was created in which the strategic and tactical aims of the Communist Party actually depended not upon the real correlation of forces in the country but upon the President's personality and actions. Thus it came about that in the conditions of the increasingly aggravated class struggle between the Left-wing and the reactionary forces in the country, the destiny of the Party was determined by purely subjective factors. When, in the summer of 1965, Sukarno's health took a turn for the worse, the reactionary circles became more active and began to prepare to seize power. The army generals secretly set up a strike force which was to fall upon their political opponents. On the other hand, among the Left-wing officers of the army (supported by prominent representatives of the Air Force command) a counter-plot was being prepared with the aim of forestalling the actions of the army command. This

counter-plot which subsequently came to be known as the "September 30, Movement" was headed by Lieutenant-Colonel Untung, commander of a battalion of Sukarno's personal guard, Army-General Supardjo, and other army officers.

Thinking that President Sukarno was on the side of the Left-wing forces and would support their struggle against the growingly active internal reaction, a narrow group from the leadership of the CPI decided to support the "September 30, Movement" without informing either the regional organisations of the Party and its most active members or even the Central Committee and some of the members of the Political Bureau of their decision. Instead of mobilising the masses to repel the reactionaries, the leaders of the CPI encouraged the palace coup. As can be seen from a document entitled "For the Right Road of the Indonesian Revolution" (published by an underground Marxist-Leninist group of the CPI at the beginning of 1967), the decision to support the "September 30, Movement" was adopted after the return from China of a delegation of the CPI headed by D. N. Aidit in August 1965, although at that time a revolutionary situation did not exist. "So that a revolution, had it begun, would have been based not on a revolutionary situation, nor on the support of the revolutionary masses, but would have depended to a great extent on the condition of Sukarno's kidneys. Truly, that is a gamble which does not even savour of the Marxist teaching concerning an armed up-rising," it is pointed out in this document.

The leaders of the CPI were urgently pushed into this suicidal road by Mao Tse-tung's group which sought to transform Indonesia into a testing ground for the implementation of "Mao's ideas". Already at the end of 1962, a group of leading functionaries of the CPI began to support Mao Tse-tung's line. They came out against the policy of peaceful co-existence of countries with different social systems, advanced the thesis of the impossibility and inexpediency of building Communism in the USSR before a complete and world-wide victory over imperialism had been won, supported the Maoists' slander about the "restoration of capitalism" in the USSR, rejected the thesis of the decisive role of the world socialist system. They strove to educate the Indonesian Communists in an anti-Soviet spirit, filling the pages of the Party press with reprints of malicious slanderous articles taken from the Chinese and Albanian press. These activities led to an acute weakening of the Indonesian Communist Party's ties with the whole of the world Communist movement. On the eve of the events of September 30, 1965, the Party found itself in a position of serious isolation from the other fraternal parties.

Since the day of the foundation of the Communist Party of Indonesia, the CPSU has always been its close and sincere friend, and at all the turning-points in its history, in its most difficult days, has afforded the Indonesian Communists all-round support. Fraternity and solidarity, a joint struggle against imperialism and reaction, unity of ideological-political positions on all the basic issues of the current time characterised the relations of the CPSU and the CPI

up to 1962. And even when the deviation of the leadership of the CPI from friendship with the CPSU and other Marxist-Leninist Parties was already making itself felt, when it became clear that the Maoist line was permeating the activities of the leading group of the Communist Party of Indonesia more and more, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union took comradely measures to help the leadership of the CPI to acquire a profound understanding of the internal and international situation and to avoid serious errors. Such attempts were also made at the end of July, 1965, when the last meeting with a delegation of the CPI headed by D. N. Aidit took place at the Central Committee of the CPSU. Unfortunately, the leadership of the CPI had already deviated too far from the positions of Marxism-Leninism and did not heed the comradely warnings of the CPSU about the danger threatening from the side of the reactionary forces.

2

UNTUNG's followers launched their coup during the night of September 30-October 1, 1965. In practice, their actions amounted to the assassination of six Generals, including A. Yani, Chief of Staff of the Army, and the announcement over the Djakarta Radio, which they had seized, of the transition of power to a "Revolutionary Council" headed by Untung. No social or political slogans, no positive programme of action were proclaimed. The hopes of the participants in the coup that President Sukarno would support them were not justified and they did not dare to appeal to the masses. In these conditions, General Nasution, Minister for Defence, and General Soeharto, Commander of Strategic Reserves, with the help of crack troops easily succeeded in suppressing the coup of the Left-wing forces by the evening of October 1.

The Army Generals did not intend to rest content with the rout of Untung's group. They decided to utilise the "events of September 30" as a long-awaited excuse to destroy their main enemy—the CPI. In this, the military leaders were supported by all the Right-wing reactionary forces in the country. Therefore, although the Communist Party as a whole had not even suspected that a coup was in preparation, savage reprisal against all its organisations began throughout the country, not only Communists but also persons suspected of being sympathisers were butchered on a mass scale. Thus, the action of September 30 was a timely gift for the Indonesian reactionaries and the foreign imperialists, for all anti-Communist forces.

The blow of Reaction took the Party by surprise. In those critical days, the political and organisational errors of the leadership of the CPI, the unpreparedness of the Party and the masses for revolutionary struggle made themselves felt to the full. The same narrow group of leaders of the CPI took up a passive position, hoping that President Sukarno would adopt some political decision and thus save the Party from destruction. Far from mobilising the Communists to resistance, in their statement of October 10 they called upon the Party "to entrust the political settle-

ment to President Sukarno." However, a "political settlement" did not follow. The balance of forces, on which the President relied, was undermined as a result of the action of September 30 and the subsequent destruction of the CPI and the mass organisations connected with it.

The commanders of the army, who had long been aspiring for power, benefited by the situation to remove Sukarno from the leadership of the country. The generals did not dare, however, to do this at once. Although the above-mentioned negative features in the country's economy and policy had greatly compromised the regime of a "Guided Democracy" and its leader in the eyes of the public (which was made wide use of after September 30 by all the Right-wing forces as propaganda against Sukarno), the President still had considerable influence. He was actively supported by the National Party of Indonesia and its mass organisations, a considerable part of the Air Force, Navy, Marines and Police remained loyal to him.

Benefiting by Sukarno's wavering and indecisiveness, the Army leaders took the line of discrediting the President and removing him from power by stages. At the same time, the armed forces and the state machinery were purged of Sukarno's followers. Under the pressure of the Right-wing forces, he yielded his positions, step by step. On March 11, 1966, Sukarno was forced to hand over the executive power to General Soeharto. Several days later, Soeharto arrested a number of Ministers of the ex-President's cabinet. In order to legalise their actions, the military leaders ensured themselves of firm positions in the supreme organ of power—the Provisional People's Consultative Congress (MPRS) and in the Parliament, expelling the Left-wing deputies and increasing the representation of the military. After General Nasution had become chairman of the MPRS, the Congress approved the new powers conferred upon Soeharto, depriving Sukarno of the title of life-time President. Under increasing pressure from the military who were actively supported by Right-wing student organisations and functionaries of a number of bourgeois parties (including those which had been banned during the period of "Guided Democracy" and had resumed their activities in the atmosphere of anti-Communist hysteria), Sukarno capitulated. In March, 1967, the MPRS removed him from power entirely and appointed Soeharto acting President and, a year later, President with full powers.

Sukarno's tragedy was that at the time of the clash of the warring groupings, which destroyed the illusory idea of "class peace" in Indonesia, he, as a leader of the petty bourgeois type, was unable to take a firm position. Seeking to restore peace by political manoeuvring, concessions, compromises, Sukarno did not understand the class nature, the implacability of the struggle that had begun.

Simultaneously with establishing a military-police dictatorship, the Army command launched terror and persecution of Communists, of all democratic, all Left-wing forces on an unprecedented scale. During the first five months following the "September 30 events", by a rough estimate, 300,000 people were

butchered without hearing or trial; although a number of well-informed organs of the Western press give the figures of those killed at 600,000, 800,000 and even one million. It is now impossible to determine the true number of victims. But one thing is clear: the history of Indonesia knows no precedent of such mass-scale and deliberate annihilation of the most progressive section of the people. Sooner or later, the truth shall come out and the world will learn the true scale of the crimes committed by the Indonesian reactionaries. The time will come when the vengeance of the Indonesian people will overtake the perpetrators of these atrocities!

Besides the military, members of different reactionary Moslem organisations and students' unions took part in the persecution of Communists. On many occasions, the brutalized anti-Communists butchered whole families, not sparing even the women and children. Among the victims are Aidit, Lukman, Njoto, the majority of the other members of the leadership of the Party. Members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPI Njono, Sudisman and a number of other leaders of the Party have been sentenced to death by a special military tribunal (Already after the appearance of this article, Njono and Sudisman were executed. — *Editor*)

Hundreds of thousands of Communists, members of Left-wing nationalist parties and organisations are now rotting in prisons and concentration camps where they are being kept in inhuman conditions, tortured and beaten, condemned to a slow death. Millions of Communists and members of progressive organisations have been deprived of all civil rights. The state machinery, the armed forces, a number of democratic organisations, Parties and trade unions have been purged. At the same time, the leaders of the reactionary Masjumi and Socialist Parties, previously sentenced for participation in anti-state rebellions, have been freed and rehabilitated.

Already in March, 1966, General Soeharto banned the CPI and all organisations connected with it. In July of the same year, a session of the MPRS adopted a special law banning the CPI and prohibiting the propagation of "Communism—Marxism—Leninism in all its forms and manifestations" in Indonesia. This officially created a "legal basis" for repressions against Communists and other progressive figures. By continuing the repressions and fanning the anti-Communist campaign, the present regime hopes to distract the people's attention from the growing economic difficulties, to free itself of the necessity of reacting to criticism otherwise than by violence, to justify the maintenance of a standing army of half a million men and demonstrate its loyalty to the West in the hope of obtaining economic aid from the Western powers.

The bloodthirsty anti-Communist terror in Indonesia arouses the lawful indignation of progressive public opinion all over the world. Faithful to their international duty, the CPSU and other fraternal parties have repeatedly protested indignantly against the cruel persecution of Communists and all progressive forces in Indonesia, against the butchery of honest patriots who made the basic contribution to Indonesia's struggle for independence. The opinion of

Communists and all Soviet people is clearly expressed in the Report of the Central Committee of the CPSU to the 23rd Party Congress. "The whole of our Party and all our nation," it is stated in the Report, "condemn the anti-communist terror in Indonesia. The reactionary forces in that country have, without trial, brutally exterminated tens of thousands of people whose only 'guilt' was their being members of the Communist Party. The persecution and banning of the Communist Party prejudices the unity of the revolutionary forces of Indonesia, undermines the anti-imperialist front and greatly damages the interests of the friendly Indonesian people. We demand that the criminal butchery of Communists, those heroic fighters for Indonesia's national independence and the interests of the working people, be stopped at once."

In October of this year, when it became known that President Soeharto had declined the appeal for pardon of a group of Indonesian Communists, including members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPI, Njono and Sudisman, the Central Committee of the CPSU issued a Statement, expressing a resolute protest against the new butchery of Indonesian patriots. The unwillingness of the Indonesian leaders to count with the just protests and demands of Soviet Communists, of the whole of the Soviet people, and to heed the voice of the world public, it is said in the Statement, shows that "in Indonesia those forces are gaining the upper hand which seek to aggravate the relations with the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries, to bury the traditional friendship between the Indonesian and the Soviet peoples in order to carry favour with the imperialist powers and win the recognition of the blackest reaction."

3

As a result of the coup, power in Indonesia has passed into the hands of the reactionary ruling clique of the armed forces which come out in a bloc with the Right-wing Moslem, bourgeois parties and organisations. This anti-Communist bloc reflects the interests of different exploiting classes and strata of Indonesian society. Of late, those sections of the bourgeoisie, which are connected with foreign capital, are gaining strength and exercising an ever greater influence upon Indonesian socio-political life. If we take into consideration the acute and prolonged economic crisis in the country, the collapse of the state sector, the strong financial dependence upon foreign sources and, finally, the weakness of the Indonesian bourgeoisie as a whole (it does not possess big enterprises or sufficient capital, with which to oppose the foreign monopolies and control the national economy), the danger of deep-laid penetration into the economy by the Western monopolies becomes obvious.

It should also be borne in mind that as a result of the destruction of the Communist Party, the persecution of other democratic forces, and the activation of the Right-wing Moslem reactionary groupings, the Indonesian working class and toiling peasantry are so far deprived of the possibility of exercising the least serious influence on the economic and political

life in the country. The small Indonesian proletariat has been crushed, its class organisations destroyed, it is controlled by the Right-wing trade unions, obedient to the present regime. As for the broad strata of the peasantry, at present, when they also have been deprived of their only mass organisation, the influence exercised upon them by the reactionary religious parties and associations has become still stronger. The activity of the organised movement of the working class has gone down sharply, a great slump has also taken place in the peasants' struggle for agrarian reforms.

The internal political situation in Indonesia remains tense. The present regime has not succeeded in achieving any considerable changes in the country's economy. Inflation which has become a most acute political problem is continuing. The amount of paper-money in circulation has been doubled in the course of 1967-68. The currency shortage is increasing. At the beginning of 1968, the total debt to foreign countries amounted to 2,500 million dollars, and it is continuing to grow. Production is dropping in all sectors of the national economy. Industrial enterprises are working at 20-30 per cent of their capacity. Serious difficulties are being faced in agriculture, in ensuring the food supply for the population. The living standards remain very low. Indonesia holds one of the last places in the world in per-capita income of the population. Mass unemployment reigns in the country, the number of unemployed in the cities approximating three million, and continues to rise. A huge number of people has no means of subsistence as they are regarded as "suspects" and deprived of the right to work for government institutions, enterprises, offices, private firms, educational establishments, etc., owing to their alleged "participation" in the "September 30 movement."

Seeking to find a way out of the economic and financial crisis, the present regime is laying special stress on the "mechanism of the free market" and the development of the private sector. The basis of the state sector has been sharply diminished owing to a number of foreign enterprises and plantations, previously nationalised or taken under the control of the state, having been returned to the former owners, and also as a result of the sale of state enterprises to private businessmen. Under these circumstances, the present leaders of Indonesia are pinning their hopes mainly on an influx of foreign capital. In search of credits, Soeharto's Government has made big concessions to the imperialist monopolies. The new law on foreign capital investments grants extensive privileges to foreign companies.

Although the Indonesian leaders are asserting that the development of economic relations with the Western powers and the strengthening of political relations with them do not signify a re-orientation of the country's foreign policy, the prospects of Indonesia being further drawn into the orbit of the economic, military and political plans of the West are very real.

It should be noted that the imperialist powers, primarily the USA, which hailed the terror unleashed by the Indonesian reaction against Communists and other progressive forces, are encouraging in every

way possible the anti-Communist line of the present Indonesian Government, which has become a state policy. Indonesia occupies an important place in the imperialists' plans. In the opinion of the American ruling circles, Indonesia's involvement in Washington's sphere of interests in South-East Asia would considerably strengthen the United States' position that has been undermined by the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people. The United States is trying to shift a part of its military-political "commitments" in South-East Asia onto the shoulders of its obedient Asian partners. At the same time, the American politicians are trying to utilise, in their own interests the natural desire of the Asian countries to achieve regional co-operation. They would like to fetter Indonesia and other non-aligned countries in South-East Asia by means of economic, cultural and technical agreements with their allies in aggressive blocs. Indonesia is already establishing economic and political relations with the puppet regimes of South Korea and Taiwan, and is continuing to strengthen relations with Thailand and Australia, the United States' allies in aggressive blocs. The American ruling circles welcomed the formation of the ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) with the participation of Indonesia, counting on utilising this grouping for anti-Communist purposes and on lending it a military nature in time.

Such is the situation which has arisen in Indonesia, in which the Indonesian Communists have to act. At present, a sharp struggle has been taking place in the Communist underground organisation in Indonesia around the question of the ways to be chosen by Communists to revive the Party and organise the working people for active resistance to the military-police dictatorship. No few documents have been published on this question, two of them deserving special mention: "Self-Criticism of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPI" and the above-mentioned "For the Right Road of the Indonesian Revolution" ("Appeal of the Marxist-Leninist group of the CPI"), reflecting the two main trends in the underground activities of the CPI.

The first document was compiled by a group of former leading functionaries of the CPI desirous of rehabilitating themselves in the eyes of the masses of Party members and of imposing upon them the "Chinese model of revolutionary struggle". One is struck primarily by the attempt of the authors of this document to erase or at least defame everything positive that was done by the Communist Party of Indonesia and its leaders after the adoption of the new Programme in 1954. Among the main political "sins" of the Party, the authors of the "Self-Criticism" include: first, admission of the possibility of winning power without a civil war; second, the effort to create a national-coalition Government with participation of representatives of all progressive, national-patriotic forces, including communists; third, the creation of a national front, in which, in the opinion of the authors of the document, representatives of reactionary classes (the compradores and landowners) participated; fourth, the maintenance of

relations with the CPSU leadership. The political line delineated in the programme as a whole is falsely characterised as "Right-wing opportunist and revisionist."

It goes without saying that in implementing their political line the leadership of the CPI committed serious errors. But these errors were not the result of adhering to the Party Programme adopted in 1954, but, on the contrary, of blatant violation of this Programme and a number of other correct decisions of the Party, adopted prior to 1962. This is pointed out in the document "For the Right Road of the Indonesian Revolution" which expresses the opinion of those who regard the past policy of the CPI basically from Marxist-Leninist positions. Critically analysing the Party's activities, the authors of this document arrive at the conclusion that the main reason for the defeat of the CPI was that it adopted Maoist concepts, in particular, Mao Tse-tung's erroneous thesis that the peasantry is the "leading force" in a revolution.

In the last few years, the leadership of the CPI paid no attention to the need for strengthening in every way possible the role of the proletarian elements in the life and activities of the Party, consolidation of their political influence in the leading nucleus of the Party, raising the ideological and cultural standards of the mass of Party members. Over-rating the revolutionary role of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry, the CPI leadership let itself be influenced by petty-bourgeois slogans, a fact that undermined the spirit of proletarian internationalism which is an inseparable principle of the activities of a party of the working class. The Party was overwhelmed by the petty-bourgeois element, as it was unable to re-educate ideologically the masses of peasants and other non-proletarian elements that had joined it in recent years.

Serious mistakes and infringements also took place in implementing inner-Party democracy. The result of such a policy, emphasize the authors of the document "For the Right Road of the Indonesian Revolution", was the isolation of the CPI from the Marxist-Leninist majority in the world Communist movement, on the international plane, and the weakening of the class position and influence of the CPI with masses, within the country.

From an analysis of the mistakes of the CPI leadership, the champions of the "Chinese way" draw the conclusions that the Communist Party must reject its former Programme and adopt the Maoist concept that the "rifle is the source of power". Indonesian Marxists-Leninists—the sound forces in the Party—consider, on the contrary, that the CPI must "revert to the right road, be loyal to the Rules and Programme of the Party...in order again to become a Party enjoying the sympathy and love of the broad masses and capable of taking the role of the vanguard, in order to become the predominant force of the revolution." Here they have in mind also the clause of the CPI Programme which points to the necessity of preparing for all forms of revolutionary struggle, armed struggle included, and of applying them as the situation demands.

In the opinion of the authors of the "Self-Criticism", "chief attention must be paid to restoration of the Party organisations in the villages." They stubbornly uphold the former erroneous thesis that "the village is the main field of action of the Party." There is no doubt that the toiling peasantry is an important force in the Indonesian revolution and the Communist Party is bound to conduct energetic work to draw it over to the side of the working class. But it would be naive to assume that the oppressed, politically ignorant peasantry, infected, moreover, by the prejudices of anti-Communism, can at the present moment become a basis for the restoration of the Communist Party. How can one forget the fact that precisely in the villages, moreover, by the hands of peasants—religious fanatics—the greatest number of Communists was butchered? Nevertheless, the authors of the "Self-Criticism" calmly call upon the surviving Party workers to leave the cities and go to the villages, to the jungle, to set up "bases" and develop guerilla warfare. Moreover, they resolutely reject all other forms of struggle. In their opinion, "work in the city and other work has no basis and is useless without revolutionary bases in the villages."

The first militant partisan groups were formed by the Maoists in the jungles of North-West Kalimantan. A considerable number of Chinese live in this part of the island and the detachments were formed mainly of them. They act uncoordinatedly and their main targets are the outposts of the Indonesian sub-units. Attention was chiefly centred, however, on the island of Java. Fulfilling the instructions of Mao Tse-tung's group, certain leaders and functionaries of the CPI set up their bases in different parts of the island, chiefly in the eastern part.

In July of this year, punitive units dealt a concentrated blow and routed the poorly-equipped small detachments of underground fighters who had not found mass support among the peasantry. Several hundred Communists and Left-wing nationalists were killed or arrested. Many leaders of the underground movement were killed or made prisoner, including all the members and candidate-members of the Political Bureau, members of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPI, and leaders of public organisations of the Party, who had remained at liberty. Thus, the attempts of Mao Tse-tung's supporters in Indonesia to start an armed uprising in Java in the conditions of decline of the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants and the practical absence of an organised proletarian party were unsuccessful. This cost the lives of thousands of Indonesian patriots, who had been deceived by the Maoist slogans.

This does not suit the official Peking propaganda and it continues, in the press and, particularly, in radio-broadcasts intended for Indonesia, to present matters as though a "people's war" had begun in Indonesia against the present regime, as though "armed forces of the Indonesian people" were waging "guerilla warfare in the villages" and "the flame of the revolutionary armed struggle of the Indonesian people had already enveloped such central islands as

Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Sumatra." Falsifying and garbling the facts, deliberately misleading the Indonesian Communists, as well as the Chinese people, the Maoists are doing their utmost to conceal the collapse of "Mao's ideas" in Indonesia and for this purpose are artificially stimulating a "revolutionary situation", sacrificing the remnants of the Indonesian Communist Party.

Indonesian Communists who hold dear the ideals of Marxism-Leninism, are resolutely rejecting this ruinous road for the Party. In counterbalance to the adventuristic concepts of Mao and his followers, who are condemning the Communist movement in Indonesia to a slow death, they are advancing a Marxist-Leninist programme of restoration of the Communist Party. They call for "resolute alienation from those who continue to uphold ultra-leftist and sectarian positions, from those who have pushed and are continuing to push the Party along the road of adventurism, from those who are opposing the strengthening of the solidarity of the international Communist movement." Advancing as one of the main tasks the restoration of the Party ranks, the rallying of Communists to the banner of Marxism-Leninism, the Indonesian Marxist-Leninists emphasize the necessity for painstaking explanatory work among the masses, the working class primarily, the need to create a "Left-wing front of unity of patriotic, democratic and progressive forces" capable of "fighting consistently and defeating the pro-imperialist and anti-democratic reactionary forces." Besides creating a wide flung political base among the people, the task has been set of providing practical training for armed struggle which, under certain conditions, may come into the foreground as the main form of revolutionary action. Indonesian Communists attach great importance to restoring relations with the international Communist movement. As it is pointed out in the "Appeal" of the Marxists-Leninists group, they must be "loyal to the content and the spirit of the Declaration and Statement of the Moscow Meetings, jointly approved by all the fraternal Parties, continue to maintain real contacts with all the Communist and Workers' Parties on the basis of independence and equality."

"In order to atone for the death of hundreds of thousands of Communists and sympathisers, whose blood drenched the sacred earth of our Homeland as a result of the present unbridled white terror," it is emphasized in this document, "in order to express gratitude for the warmth of the international solidarity and support, our only reply must be to march forward along the new, the right Marxist-Leninist road, fighting for the final victory of our national-democratic revolution."

4

THE defeat of the Communist Party of Indonesia, of other progressive national-patriotic organisations, which followed the events of September 30, 1965, is the direct result of its adherence to the adventuristic policy of the group of Mao Tse-tung, a policy directed towards artificial stimulation of revolutionary outbursts in Asia, irrespective of the

existence of objective or subjective factors of revolution in this area. At the same time, the lessons of the Indonesian tragedy show once again what a tremendous danger for the Communist movement is presented by petty-bourgeois leftism. Among the countries of the East, Indonesia stands out by the predominant petty-bourgeois nature of its economic and social structure. The CPI never succeeded in coping with this petty-bourgeois trend and the history of the communist movement in that country is an example of a protracted chronic case of "leftism" in combination with Right-wing opportunist concessions to bourgeois nationalism.

It was quite natural for the CPI to co-operate with Sukarno who had one prestige with the people by his long years of struggle for the independence of Indonesia. But the line of *absolute and unconditional support* of Sukarno, taken by the CPI leadership, was not right as it led to forgetting the revolutionary struggle for the day-to-day and radical interests of the proletariat and all the working people at a time when the position of the latter was steadily deteriorating. As a result, the Party began to loose support among the masses and this weakened it greatly. The Communists should have shown lofty class principles, revolutionary flexibility, the ability to uphold foremost the interests of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry. But the CPI leadership trailed behind Sukarno.

This line of the CPI leadership logically and inevitably led to the denial of a number of the most important Marxist-Leninist principles. In the conditions of a petty-bourgeois peasant country, the CPI leadership sought mass support not by *instilling Marxist-Leninist ideas into the minds of the peasantry*, but by Maoist ways, by adapting revolutionary theory to the petty-bourgeois ideology of the peasants. Indiscriminately declaring the whole of the peasantry to be "the most revolutionary class" in Indonesia, the leadership of the CPI advanced the slogan of "integration of Marxism-Leninism with the peasantry" in general. At the December Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Indonesia in 1963, the Chairman of the Central Committee, D.N. Aidit, said: "The peasant masses represent the decisive force in carrying out not only the first, national-democratic stage of our revolution, but also the second, socialist stage."

Under the growing pressure of the petty-bourgeois nationalistic elements within the Party itself, the leadership of the CPI gradually yielded the class positions, actually took the road of unprincipled alliance with the bourgeoisie. The result of this was a slackening of vigilance and the gradual ideological disarmament of the Party in the face of the class enemy who was constantly searching for ways of making short shrift of the Communists, forgetting one of Lenin's most important thesis that the Communist Party must undisputedly retain its ideological political independence, must have mastery of all forms of class struggle without exception, must constantly prepare, to an equal extent, for a peaceful, as well as an armed, way of developing a revolution.

The mistakes made by the leadership of the CPI

in the last years preceding the events of September 30, 1965 would not have led to such a tragic outcome for the Communist movement of that country but for the influence exercised upon the CPI leadership by the group of Mao Tse-tung. The international Communist movement is aware of the difficult position of the Burmese, Thailand and Malayan Communist Parties. Their leaders, blindly following the directives of Mao's group, have for many years past already been ignoring the objective conditions, are imposing the adventurist "Chinese road" upon the parties. As a result, the Communists of Burma, Thailand, Malaya have found themselves cut off from the working-class of their countries, from their people.

Disregarding the fact that its adventurist line has already led to the senseless death of tens of thousands of patriots in the above-mentioned countries, Mao Tse-tung's group has set itself the aim of implementing its "ideas" in Indonesia. Following Mao, certain leaders of the CPI began to propagate a far-fetched theory about "the existence of a brilliant revolutionary situation in South-East Asia", that the Indonesian revolution may accelerate an allegedly ripening "revolutionary explosion" in the countries of the "third world". Speaking at a Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the CPI (in May, 1965), D.N. Aidit stated: "The experience of the political struggle in Indonesia shows that Indonesia may play its role in further promoting the development of the revolutionary situation in Asia and Africa."

Following Mao, the leaders of the CPI took the road of rejecting the joint decisions of the Moscow Meetings of 1957 and 1960 agreed upon by all the fraternal Parties (including the CPI), of aggravating relations with the CPSU and the overwhelming majority of other detachments of the international Communist movement. It should be noted that many Indonesian Communists, including some members of the Central Committee of the CPI, realised the error of the Maoist line of a number of their leaders. But in the leadership of the CPI the upper hand was gained by persons who played the role of Mao's agents in implanting in the Party a policy directed towards a breach in the traditional friendship with the Soviet Union. This policy, contradicting the national interests of Indonesia, also undermined the political positions of the Party among the people.

The people and the mass of Party members of Indonesia could not understand the deviation of the CPI leadership from the general line of the international Communist movement, from the policy of friendship with the Soviet Union. Many Indonesian Communists were perplexed by their leaders' poorly concealed dependence upon Mao. The masses of workers and peasants wanted to see the CPI as their own independent Party, part of the working people of Indonesia. But the errors in the political line of the Party leadership both within the country and in international affairs, brought it about that the leadership of the CPI, by isolating itself from the international communist movement, from the CPSU,

isolated itself from its own proletariat, from the rank-and-file members of the CPI.

When the most cruel terror was unleashed against the Communist Party of Indonesia, not only the broad masses of the people, but even the most active members of the CPI and also the rank-and-file Communists failed to offer organised resistance. They were taken unaware. The Programme directions of the Party on mastering all forms of revolutionary struggle had in reality been ignored by its leadership. The Party was not prepared for armed resistance to the reactionaries. The CPI as a whole had to pay a high price for the mistakes of its leadership who had forgotten the basic princi-

ples of Marxism-Leninism, the principles of proletarian internationalism.

The Communist movement in Indonesia has now entered upon a difficult period. The Indonesian Communists are suffering keenly in the knowledge of the defeat of their Party, the death of hundreds of thousands of their comrades in arms. They see a way out in the rebirth of the CPI on a genuinely Marxist-Leninist basis, along the lines of resolute alienation from the Maoists and restoration of relations, friendship and solidarity with the international Communist movement. Important, serious work lies before them. The Indonesian Marxist-Leninists believe in its success.

Dimensions of Assam Hills Problem

S. K. CHOUBE

THE Eastern Indian Hills, known broadly as the 'Assam Hills,' are inhabited by a motly group of people, mostly of Tibeto-Burmese stock. The Khasis have been considered, by B.S. Guha, as an anthropological mystery, being about the only purely Austic speaking people with a matriarchal system. The position of the Garos is, however, no less mysterious, for, though their language belongs to the Tibeto-Burmese family, their social customs are still matriarchal. Elements of matriarchy are indeed observable in some other pockets of this tribel belt—for instance among some Kuki groups of Manipur, suggesting an Austic cultural base under the Tibeto-Burmese veneer.

In the Ahom period of Assam's history, a kind of good-neighbourly relations were maintained between the people of the

Assam Valley and the hills, though occasional raids and wars were not unknown. After the annexation of Assam by the British in the twenties of the last century, the British administration of Bengal was confronted with the "frontier question". Whereas the Khasi-Jaintia hills, the Garo hills, and the Mikir and Cachher hills came under the aegis of British Raj, NEFA, Nagaland, Manipur and the Lushai Hills were for long regarded as "border regions" on which only a certain amount of "political control" was exercised. Sir Robert Reid, Governor of Assam pointed out that as late as 1883 "the Naga Hill district had only been formed a few years, the Lushai Hills district was not to be constituted till six years later : while the two Frontier Tracts were not to come into existence until 1912, after the Abor expedition".

It was the Chin-Lushai expedition of 1889-90 that brought into existence two administrative districts in the Lushai Hills

(North and South) with headquarters at Aijal and Lungleh ; their unification and merger with Assam was effected in 1898. Though in 1882 an Assistant Political Officer was appointed at Sadiya for the Dibrugarh Frontier Tract, it was only in 1912, that the Western Section of the North-East Frontier Tract was brought under British administration, with the Deputy Commissioner of Darrang acting as its Political Officer.

British Laws

Ever since the Government of India Act, 1870, was enforced the British started a separate administration for the hills for reasons which may appear both bona fide and mala fide. A rational estimate would be that whereas effective application of British Raj over these hills varied from place to place and the tribals were genuinely disturbed by the encroachment of the plains people on their land and forests,

The author is a Lecturer, St. Edmund's College Shillong, Assam.

as for instance, the foothills of NEFA and Nagaland were encroached upon by the European planters of Sibsagar, and a need for some protection for the tribals was genuinely felt necessary. At the same time, the restrictions on travel, etc., were used discriminatorily in the hills. Even the Catholic Church complains that special favour was accorded to the Protestant and Anglican Church in the hills, as a result of which the Catholic Church was practically confined to Shillong and surrounding areas.

Regulation 5 of 1873 under the Government of India Act of 1870 "for the peace and government of certain districts on the Eastern Frontier of Bengal", applicable to almost the whole of Assam and Chittagong Hills, made it "lawful for the Chief Commissioner of Assam with the previous sanction of the Governor General-in-Council, to prescribe, from time to time by notification.....a line to be called 'the Inner Line' " in the area. The Chief Commissioner might also prohibit British subjects or persons living in the area going across the same line. The sanction of the Governor General-in-Council was not necessary since the passage of the Government of India (Adaptation of Indian Laws) Order, 1937; and now authority over the Inner Line vests with the State Government.

The Inner Line Notifications were issued as late as 1942 and covered practically the whole of NEFA down to the foothills, Nagaland, Mizo Hills and North Cachar (a mile from each side of the railway line).

Excluded Areas

Regulation 5 of 1873 was further strengthened by the Scheduled District Act of 1874 the Assam Frontier Tract Regulation, 1880, the Garo Hills Regulation of 1882 and the Chin Hills Regulation of 1896, which restricted encroachment by plains people on the land and forests of the hills people. The Government of India Act 1919 authorised the Provincial Governors to declare any territory as "backward

area" and retain it under their personal jurisdiction. The 1935 Act provided for the creation of Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas. NEFA, Nagaland, Lushai Hill and North Cachar districts were made Excluded, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and Mikir Hills declared Partially Excluded Areas. The Partially Excluded Area had a very restricted franchise, the Excluded areas none.

Autonomy

Neither the Inner Line, nor the policy of exclusion, however, was exclusive to Assam Hills. In the tribal areas of the North-West Frontier province the Inner Line was first experimented. The Government of India (Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas) Order, 1936 covered wide stretches of tribal belts in Madras, Bengal, Punjab and the NWFP as well as Assam. About the effect of exclusion the Sub-Committee on the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas (other than those in Assam) of the Constituent Assembly's Advisory Committee commented: "Although exclusion or partial exclusion has been in force for a number of years now the benefits which the areas have derived from it are not particularly noticeable.....No definite programme of development of excluded areas with a view to removing the disabilities of exclusion has been followed.....On the other hand, in the partially excluded areas also little improvement is as yet visible".

As in the rest of India, a special problem emerged out of the retention of 25 native States with doubtful independence in this area, besides Tripura. In 1851 Manipur was recognised as a native State and a Political Agent was appointed. In the Khasi Hills (except the Jaintia Hills and the Shillong municipal area, where direct British administration was imposed,) some 24 "states" were allowed to exist, under chiefs with various designations like Siem and Sardar, whereas the Deputy Commissioner of Shillong continued to act as the Political Agent to these states.

The pre-British tribal organisations of the area were not uniform. In the Khasi Hills, while some of the Siems were elected by universal male franchise in the tribes, some were chosen by a small electorate of influential Lyngdohs or Myntries; some Siemships were even hereditary. In the Garo Hills the Chiefs (Nokma) belonged to the clan. So did the Lals of Lushai hills belong to the clan of 'Sailos'. In the Naga Hills and NEFA both hereditary and elective chiefships existed side by side. However, absolute authority was not concentrated in the hands of the chiefs who almost invariably shared their power with the village elders or the tribal aristocracy. The village or tribal councils exercised authority over land distribution and administration of justice.

With the incursion of the British, interference with both these clan rights started. Intra-tribal and inter-tribal feuds, leading occasionally to murders, head-hunting and raids were a major headache for the administration and, in fact were the major excuse for the adoption of a "forward policy". After the establishment of British authority, the Deputy Commissioners and Political Officers would always insist the surrender of major criminals to British courts. For the establishment of administrative towns and stations, land was grabbed from the clans and frequently arrangements were made with the chiefs regarding payment of some compensations. In 1898-99 Shakespeare imposed his policy of "Land Settlement" over Lushai Hills, recognising the absolute rights of the chiefs in maintaining law and order and distributing land in their areas. Thus, the British policy was responsible for the growth of "private ownership in land, which had originally belonged to the whole tribe.

New Phase

While India stood on the threshold of independence, the Gopinath Bardoloi Committee on the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas of Assam could not give a happy report on the development of the hill areas.

"Of the people in the Partially Excluded Areas, the Khasis are the most advanced and the Mikirs the least". Of the Excluded Areas, the Lushai Hills, having benefited from the activities of the Missionaries, "cannot be said to be behind the people of the plains in culture, education and literacy. In literacy particularly they are in a better position than a good number of plains areas and the general percentage of literacy among them is about 13 per cent, while the literacy among men alone is about 30 per cent". There were many college-educated Nagas, though their over-all literacy was lower than that of the Lushais. "In the North Cachar Hills the development of people has not been impressive," wrote the Commission, while the Frontier Tracts, "parts of which must be inhabited by people with contact with civilization or education, are of course on a separate footing." Yet, the level of agriculture and standard of living in all the hills was miserably low, people being dependent mostly on jhum cultivation.

The commission recognised a political problem in the aspirations of the hills people, as "the hill people, even in the excluded areas were not found lacking in political consciousness. Perhaps not without instigation by certain elements this consciousness has even instilled ideas of an indepen-

dent status, the external relations in which would be governed by treaty or agreement only" (with India). "In the Mikir Hills and North Cachar Hills, which are the least vocal and advanced of the areas under consideration, there would probably be satisfaction if control over land customs and administration of justice are left to the local people." A feeling common to all the Hill Districts was "that people of the same tribe should brought together under a common administration. This has led to a demand for rectification of boundaries. The Lushai want the Kuki of Manipur and other areas in their boundaries. The Nagas want the Zemi areas of the North Cachar Hills included in the district, and so on".

In the local tribal organisations, the Bardoloi Committee found a "suitable background for local self-government", yet, it thought that the "tribes altogether lack the experience of modern self-governing institutions". Except the Shillong municipality there was no statutory local authority in the hills. "While there is no doubt that the Naga, Lushai, Khasi and Garo will be able to manage a large measure of local autonomy, the North Cachar tribes and the Mikir may yet want a period of supervision and guidance".

In determining the future policy on Assam hills, it put

great emphasis on the problem of advancement and identification of the hills people with the rest of India. At the same time, it stressed the protection of indigenous customs, land-rights and culture of the people and checking of exploitation by money-lenders and land-grabbers from the plains. The Commission recommended the formation of 'District Councils' with power to regulate these matters along with the power of local boards, uniformly for the Hills, though in the North Cachar and Mikir Hills supervisory power for the Deputy Commissioner was also recommended.

Growth of political movements in the hills is a fascinating subject. It will suffice here to mention that the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution fell far short of the aspirations of the hills people. While the Nagas took the path of armed struggle, the various political parties in the other hill continued agitation, first for enlarged powers for the District Councils, and then for Statehood. Finally, in 1963, Nagaland was constituted as a separate State within India, a Scheme of Panchayati Raj in NEFA was adopted this year and a reorganisation of the rest of Assam was outlined in the Government of India's statement of September 11, 1968, though, in view of the fluidity of the Mizo Hill's political situation, the status quo is being maintained in the same area.

Remember The Jawan

CONTRIBUTE LIBERALLY ON ARMED FORCES FLAG DAY

(DECEMBER 7)

FOR THE WELFARE OF EX-SERVICEMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Discussion on Czechoslovakia continues for one more week in Mainstream, this time Lajpat Rai focussing attention on the reactions from Cuba and Korea. Because of the limited space available for this Discussion in this week's Mainstream, it will be rounded off next week.

Czechoslovak Tragedy : Its Lessons

LAJPAT RAI

FROM the facts available to us now it is clear that Czechoslovakia was moving towards a counter-revolutionary situation. All the glib talk about liberalization, democratization and "building of a socialist society in terms of modern realities" can fool no one. In this situation it was absolutely necessary, at all costs, to prevent Czechoslovakia marching into the imperialist parlour.

None can deny that it was a painful measure. None can deny that the sovereignty of the Czechoslovak state was infringed. None can also deny that it led to the infringement of legal principles and international norms that have often served as a shield for the people against injustice and are highly esteemed all over the world. Speaking in pure legal terms the action is indefensible. And yet there is more than pure legality, more than the formal infringement of international norms, involved in the issue. The critics of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact countries have their arguments on grounds of legality, international law or the principle of sovereignty. They refuse to see the issue in its political perspective of the imperialist global strategy, of the rise of German revanchism—the most trusted agency of imperialism in Europe, of the long term imperialist plans of dismemberment and the ultimate liquidation of the socialist camp.

The Warsaw Pact countries' timely intervention and subsequent defeat of the counter-revolution in Czechoslovakia is a

victory of the socialist forces over the imperialist manoeuvres, over the designs of the German revanchists.

But it is a costly victory, a victory tinged with tragedy. The tragedy revealed itself in the circumstances in which the millions of Czechoslovak people had to make a choice between remaining passive and suffering humiliation or to struggle in comradeship with the American agents and the German spies, who exploiting the situation posed as defenders of sovereignty, of patriotism and the liberty of Czechoslovakia. This was bound to lead Communists and genuine socialists all over the world to inquire into the causes and circumstances in which after twenty years of rule by the Communists in a country such a situation could arise, develop and culminate in a tragedy of such magnitude.

Already some Communist Parties have come out with their analysis of the Czechoslovak events. While the Chinese Communist Party's analysis is a preposterous and self-defeating document not worthy of serious consideration by the Communists, the detailed analysis of Cuban, Korean and the Vietnamese Communist Parties deserve the attention of all those who not only seriously want to understand the present situation, but also are interested in the long-term issues involved in the Czechoslovak tragedy.

According to the Cuban Communist Party "the bureaucratic methods of leadership; lack of

contact with the masses and the neglect of Communist ideals in more than one socialist country of Europe have led to the present situation."

Bureaucracy has been the bane of socialist societies for too long. The strata of privileged bureaucrats have lost all contacts with the mass of their people. They live in their political ivory towers ruling their countries through administrative methods which are the negation of the role of the masses in building socialism under the leadership and guidance of the Communist Party. This parasitic bureaucracy now enjoys in the lands of socialism such privileges as country houses, best housing in cities, furniture, automobiles and other similar evidences of privilege and power. This creates a demonstrative effect on the people especially on the youth leading to a slow corroding of the Communist consciousness giving rise to an atmosphere in which the ideas of consumption and living of the consumer societies of the West begin to penetrate into socialist societies. The process is further accentuated by the so-called cultural exchanges with the Western countries especially with the United States where young students and intellectuals from socialist countries are exposed to the vicious atmosphere of a corrupt and degenerate social system.

Talking from the experience of the Cuban students and others who recently lived in some socialist countries of Europe, Castro made the following observation on Czechoslovak events in

his speech on August 23 :

"Those who have visited these (socialist) countries including the Cuban scholarship students have come back dissatisfied and said to us : Over there the youth are not being educated in the ideas of communism. The youth there are being influenced by all the ideas and tastes prevalent in the countries of Western Europe. In many places the main topic of conversation is money, material gains and salaries".

Another factor, according to Cuban Communists, which has led to "stifling of the combat spirit and to weakening of the people's readiness to face risks and sacrifices" is the widespread preaching of peace within the socialist countries. According to them it is futile, even harmful, to preach peace and organize peace conferences and campaigns in socialist countries. Preaching for peace should be done in the imperialist countries from where the danger to world peace stems. And ironically it is these soft-living, jet-travelling and conference-making peace leaders who are the most confused section of the socialist movement on the question of Czechoslovakia, not only in India but elsewhere too. And, it is in these "peace circles" where one misses the Communist consciousness the most and also finds comfortable conditions of work, divorced from the hard realities of life faced by the common people.

Yet another factor responsible for the situation is what the Cubans call "the development of the commercial mentality and the corroding of the true internationalism" inside some of the European socialist countries. They give the example of socialist Czechoslovakia selling outdated junk-factories to Cuba at high prices, socialist Czechoslovakia selling at higher prices not only arms manufactured in their armament factories, but also those captured from Nazi troops in Czechoslovakia during the Second World War. This is how Castro puts it :

"We have seen the results of many of the economic concepts on which some socialist countries have their business transactions even while dealing with brother socialist countries. They will

eagerly sell any old junk to a brother country making a revolution. All their concepts of self-financing profits, gains and material incentives lead them on to this path, giving rise to conflicts, discontent and misunderstandings."

And what place can true internationalism occupy in this psychological frame-work—the mental framework of a merchant eager to maximize his profits at all costs. This according to the Cuban leadership, leads to the corruption of Communist consciousness and the substitution in its place of the mentality of capitalism.

All this leads to yet another deformation—the excessive use of material incentives as the instrument of mass mobilization. The Cuban leaders accept the place of material incentives in the socialist societies. But according to them these material incentives should be of social nature. And along with it, they insist on the moral incentives which according to them are the only true instrument of mass mobilization in a socialist society. As Che Gueve wrote :

"To build communism, a new man must be created simultaneously with the material base. That is why it is so important to choose correctly the instrument of mass mobilization in a socialist society. That instrument must be fundamentally of a moral character, without forgetting the use of material incentives specially those of a social nature".

What has actually happened in some socialist countries is the vulgarization of the role of economic incentives. Says Castro :

"There is no such thing as some of the socialist countries as volunteer work ; volunteer work is paid for. It is considered there that true volunteer work is almost an anti-Marxist heresy. All sorts of things are done even to such a point where the degree of skill in landing an airplane or making a parachute jump determines the granting of one kind of money incentive or the other. The sensibilities of many of our men (visiting or studying in some socialist countries) have been injured by such vulgar use of material incentives or such vulgar commercialization of the con-

science of men."

The contribution of the Korean Worker's Party (Communist) in the discussion on Czechoslovakia is also worth nothing. They have emphasised the complete neglect of political and ideological work among the masses and certain "revisionist positions in the ideological field" as responsible for the Czechoslovak tragedy. The issues are : the place and the role of the Communist Party in a socialist state, the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the concept of proletarian internationalism and the duties and the obligations it imposes on a socialist state and its ruling Communist Party. In this regard the lead came from the Communist Party of Soviet Union which was responsible for introducing such non-class concepts as the "party of the whole people" and the "State of the whole people" instead of the Party of the working class and the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Czechoslovak Communists went a step further and declared the leading role of the Communist Party to be over except in a "spiritual" sense. They gave up the class struggle openly denying the dictatorship of the proletariat, as evident from their Action Programme. The Korean document on Czechoslovakia quotes comrade Kim Il Sung who said :

"It goes without saying that the class struggle must be continued under socialism. Those who deny class struggle under socialism are revisionists and have no intention of making revolution."

The Soviet leaders acquiesced in the so-called 'liberalization' and 'democratization' process let loose in Czechoslovakia under the pretext of fighting the incorrect and bureaucratic methods of the Novotny regime.

Another issue on which both the Cubans and the Korean leaders feel very strongly is the attitude of the Soviet Union and some other Socialist countries towards Yugoslavia—a country whose leadership played a vicious role in the whole Czechoslovak affair.

The leaders of the so-called Yugoslav League of Communists

had repudiated the Marxist-Leninist concepts of the Communist Party and its role, the dictatorship of the proletariat and its place in the building of socialism and proletarian internationalism, as early as 1949. But the leaders of the Soviet Communist Party after its 20th Congress (1956) rehabilitated this group of renegades from communism, hobnobbed with them, inviting them to all international Communist gatherings and to the international socialist mass organizations. Yugoslavia for the Soviet leaders was a 'fraternal socialist State' where the socio-economic order was essentially socialist despite errors and shortcomings.

Describing the role of the so-called League of Yugoslav Communists in the Czechoslovak tragedy, Fidel Castro said in his speech :

"They enthusiastically applauded all the liberal reforms, the concept of the Party ceasing to be the instrument of revolutionary power—that the exercise of power cease to be the function of the Party—because that is very closely allied to the concept of the League of Yugoslav Communists."

Describing this League of Yugoslav Communists, Castro said : "This organisation—as the agent of imperialism was one of the principal promoter of the deformation of the Czechoslovakian political process. And yet Yugoslavia began to be called a Communist country and be invited to the meetings of Socialist

countries, to the meetings of mass organizations and of the Communist Parties."

Castro then narrated how Yugoslavia refused to sell arms to Cuba in 1959 on the ground that this would annoy the Americans : "The Yugoslavs stated that the amount of transaction did not justify the difficulties they would run into with the United States for having sold weapons to us." No wonder the Korean document describes Tito as a "despicable renegade to the revolution," who "tried by hook or by crook to encourage and agitate the counter-revolutionary forces of this country declaring that Yugoslavia warmly welcomes and supports the cause of 'democratisation' in Czechoslovakia."

These are some of the issues which need to be pondered over by the Communists and genuine socialists all over the world. What is needed today is a free and frank discussion inside the world Communist movement to thrash out the issues and to reach a more or less unified understanding on them. In this situation a heavy responsibility lies on the shoulders of the Communist Party of Soviet Union. Their mistakes have contributed in no mean way in precipitating this tragedy the effect of which will haunt the Communist movement for sometime to come. The Soviet leaders must understand that the Soviet Union being the leader of the socialist camp does not mean that the world communist movement will accept their guidance uncritically. The

fact that Russia was the first country to make a socialist revolution or that the Soviet Party had a leader of Lenin's stature or that the Soviet Union today is a great nuclear power in the world does not automatically lead to the acceptance of its guidance by the world movement. The present leadership of the Soviet Communist Party has to examine both its internal and external policies self-critically. It has also to make changes in its style of functioning inside the world Socialist Community. They must give up the tendency to surround themselves with flatterers and sycophants, who have been their favourites in the past. Actually the flatterers and the sycophants have not been the best friends of the Soviet Union and critics need not be *ifso facto* dubbed as "anti-Soviet." They have turned out to be the opportunistic elements taking advantage of an unfortunate situation created by the schism inside the world Communist movement. All these lackies which abound in the international mass organizations especially inside the so-called all-class organizations should be marked out and cast aside. They are the pace-setters in the field of ideological softening, political corruption and moral degradation.

The world Communist movement today stands at cross-roads. The duty of a true Communist is to help in finding the correct road leading to a bright future for the entire humanity which Communism alone can ensure.

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BOOK REVIEW

A PIONEER OF LAST CENTURY

Dewan Rangacharlu : by N.S. Chandrasekhara, Publications Division : Pp. 188 : Rs. 2.50.

THE Publications Division's series 'Builders of Modern India' is useful in focussing attention on eminent Indians of the past. Those born in the post-Independence era know little of the great men who strove in their times to bring the benefits of modern liberal ideas to their tradition-bound countrymen.

The leaders already covered in these series are Dadabhai Naoroji, C.R. Das, Lokmanya Tilak. This book on Dewan Rangacharlu is a short, well-written account which traces the life of one of the most comprehensive intellects who rose from humble beginnings to be most successful Dewan of Mysore.

Rangacharlu was born in 1831 in Chingleput District of Madras Presidency. His father Raghavacharya did his best to secure for his sons the benefits of English education. Rangacharlu first joined Pachaiyappa's School and later the famous Madras High School of which E.B. Powell, one of the pioneers of English education in South India, was the Principal. In 1849 he passed the first proficiency examination with great credit.

He then joined Government service as temporary Hazoor Deputy Accountant. By his conspicuous talents he rose within nine years to the position of Deputy Collector. He also served in the Inam Commission set up in the Madras Presidency and in the Railway Commission, as PA to the common chairman of the two Commissions.

In 1868 Rangacharlu was sent on deputation to Mysore State and he remained there till his death.

A chapter is devoted to the history of Mysore State, because it forms the backdrop to Rangacharlu's life. The Mysore royal family has produced distinguished rulers such as Raja Wodeyar I (1578-1617), Ranadheera Kantheera Narasuraja Wodeyar (1638-1659) renowned for his valour,

and Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar (1672-1704). After the last came a succession of incompetent rajas, and power percolated down to the chieftains. In 1749 Hyder Ali, an unknown volunteer horseman, joined the service of Mysore State and rose gradually to supreme power. He was succeeded by his son Tipu. In the fourth Mysore war, Tipu was defeated and killed by the British. However, by the subsidiary treaty of Seringapatam signed in 1799, the British restored Mysore to the ancient family of the rajas and Krishnaraja Wodeyar III, who was only five, was installed on the throne.

On attaining majority the prince took over administration; however, on charges of misrule, it was later resumed by the British. As the Maharaja was without issue, Mysore would have lapsed back in any case to the British. The Maharaja adopted a son and after much wrangling the British recognised him as the legal heir.

In 1868 Krishnaraja Wodeyar III passed away and the British resumed control. It was found necessary to prepare a complete inventory of the Maharaja's properties, scrutinise the expenditure of the palace and settle outstanding debts. One Major Elliot was appointed to carry out these tasks and Rangacharlu was appointed as his assistant. He served Mysore for 18 years and became the Dewan.

As Dewan of Mysore Rangacharlu made full use of his great administrative talents. He tightened administrative control and stabilised the finances of the State by effecting drastic economy in all branches of government. He fostered agriculture and industry. A scrupulously honest man, he could not brook corruption and tried his best to check the general permissiveness that prevailed in palace circles. He was fired with a zeal to prove to the British that Indians were in no way inferior to them in administrative talent. In keeping with his democratic leanings Rangacharlu established in Mysore the first Representative Assembly in India.

Rangacharlu was altogether a remarkable man. Though he

achieved remarkable success in a short time, he retained his roots among the people from among whom he had risen. He lived for only two years after becoming Dewan but even in that brief period left a lasting mark.—P.C.

USEFUL WORK

Indian Press Index (March 1968 pilot fascicule)—Monthly : Delhi Library Association, Delhi Rs. 120/- (Annual).

THE pilot fascicule of the *Indian Press Index* brought out by the Delhi Library Association is an index to editorials, articles, special write-ups and important communications, published in 16 Indian dailies. This is one of the few attempts made in our country to provide the reader with an index of the Press on the pattern of index to the *London Times* and the *New York Times*.

The present issue contains about 2,400 entries arranged in an alphabetical-classified order, giving bibliographical details, alphabetical index, and a separate section each on Biographies and Book Reviews.

The Index is bound to be popular with journalists, scholars, librarians, administrators, politicians and parliamentarians, businessmen and countless functionaries, as a useful reference and bibliographical tool. It is commendable that henceforth the index will take in 25 newspapers. A total of 30,000 items per annum which the index contemplates to cover is a respectable figure.

But the Index has drawbacks too. First of all, it is not clear why the scope is confined to editorials, articles and special write-ups and excludes the no less important news items and documentary material. Secondly, subject headings used are not based on a standardized list. While the various 'games' are grouped together under the general heading of 'sports', the different industries are listed separately. Such related subjects like Communism and the Budapest Conference have not been brought together.

The high incidence of mistakes and omissions could have been easily eliminated.

—L.C. Kumar

minent a part in it and worked in close cooperation with the Indian Big Business organisers of it make it even more ominous. It was indicative of the new perspective for Indian development that is gaining ground either purposefully or by default in the context of the growing scope and strength for private sector in the country.

Efforts have always been made to attract as much of foreign private capital as possible. These efforts are always very much intensified when difficulties grow in the smooth inflow of official foreign aid. The prospects of getting official aid just now are not very good and it was to be expected that special efforts to encourage foreign private investments would be made; and this is being done. But the perspective outlined in this context at the Seminar was very revealing.

India is no longer a backward economy and it has already achieved a mid-level or intermediate level of industrial development. The role of the foreign private capital was envisaged in this context. It was suggested to the foreign investors that a vast

gap had arisen between other backward economies and markets and advanced economies, because of the latest technological advances. This gap would make it impossible for the developed world to have even normal business in many parts of the under-developed markets. India, on the other hand, had developed the capacity to absorb and to take advantage of the new advance in the West, and India's industrial structure for that reason could be used by the developed countries to reach out to under-developed countries' markets more effectively. Let production capacities of intermediate technology be set up in India, by collaboration between Indian and foreign capital and the production from these capacities go to the under-developed markets. What was thus offered was a relationship of a junior partner to the developed capitalism of the West for global operations. The foreign investors present at the Seminar were not easily taken in by such proposal and perspective and still wanted a totally uninhibited flow of foreign capital into India without in any way relating that flow to local industrial

development—achieved or potential—or its global possibilities. But the perspective outlined by the Indian side evoked considerable interest and has certainly important operational possibility too. It was again in this context that the Indian spokesmen explained the Government policy of specifying the field, in itself very large, open for foreign private investment—where foreign capital will be welcomed with open arms—as well as the request for removal of restrictions on export of goods manufactured by joint ventures in India.

In the event of planning in the public sector shrinking and greater measure of initiative and scope being extended to the private sector, the feasibility of such a relationship between Indian and foreign private capital will assume considerable importance. The foreign investors who took part at the Seminar were quite impressed with its potential and did not appear to be as sceptic as they were only a few months ago about their doing business in India and entering into closer partnership with Indian capital for that. December 2. —Balraj Mehta.

SOCIALISM AND COLONIAL MIDDLE CLASS (Continued from Page 16)

element in the working class movement, the middle class Congressmen were over-confident of their strength, tactics and strategy. At the Lahore Congress, the Congressmen shouted, "No, go back", when H.O. Raja began to speak on his amendment to the independence resolution proposing that beside civil disobedience the Congress should organize the workers for a general strike. Only the intervention of the President enabled him to proceed with his speech. By the year 1936 the political climate had radically changed. Now the Congressmen listened intently and approvingly to Nehru's historic Lucknow thesis which was his edition of the Dimitrov thesis. Some of them proceeded to

implement his advice: "The Congress must be not only *for* the masses, as it claims to be, but *of* the masses only then will it really be for the masses."

By the mid-thirties socialism came to stay in the Indian political life. Of course, in the atmosphere of Tammany Hall bossism that corroded the Congress organization in 1937-39 some Machiavellis or Little Machiavellis swore by socialism. But, by and large, the young middle-class patriot was sincere in his socialist professions. Thus it was the logic of nationalism that drove the colonial middle class towards acceptance of socialism. In its turn, this class led the Renaissance to its logical and complete shape. The highest

expression of this Renaissance was the modern nationalism: This nationalism was mainly anti-medieval and anti-imperialist; it was more or less an all-class movement. It was only under the impact of socialism that it became anti-feudal also and hence complete. Indian nationalism now was provided with a rational and revolutionary norm; it became a positive creed. Its international outlook was based on the humanist idea of Raja Ram Mohan Roy: "Enemies of liberty and friends of despotism have never been, and never will be ultimately successful." The middle class became the real leader of the people and its nationalism became meaningful to the millions.

**SUPREME COURT JUDGMENT ON MAINSTREAM APPEAL
ON
CONTEMPT OF COURT CONVICTION**

*CRIMINAL APPELLATE JURISDICTION
CRIMINAL APPEAL NO. 159 OF 1966.*

295 (November)
Dated 19-11-1968.

**Perspective Publications (P)
Ltd. & Anr.**

... **Appellants**

vs.

The State of Maharashtra

... **Respondent**

Contempt of Court—Appeal by Publisher—Plea—Statements made out only on a charge of bias in the Judge and does not constitute contempt—

Held : English and Indian Case law discussed—What will not be contempt—criticism of Judge's conduct in the discharge of his Judicial duties—Libel of a Judge and contempt of Court distinguished—principles governing contempt of Court in India reiterated—test is injury to public—is bonafide and truth defence in charge of contempt—Appeal dismissed—Words & Phrases : Libel of Judge—Contempt of Court.

JUDGMENT

GROVER, J.

This is an appeal from the judgment of the Bombay High Court passed in exercise of ordinary original civil jurisdiction by which the appellants were found guilty of having committed contempt of Mr. Justice Tarkunde in his judicial capacity and of the court. Appellant No. 2 D. R. Goel, who is the Editor, Printer and Publisher of Perspective Publications (P) Ltd.—appellant No. 1, was sentenced to simple imprisonment for one month together with fine amounting to Rs. 1,000, in default of payment of fine he was to undergo further simple imprisonment for the same period. The appellants were also directed to pay the costs incurred by the State. On behalf of the first appellant it has been stated at the bar that the appeal is not being pressed.

The background in which the impugned article was published on April 24, 1965, in a weekly periodical called "MAINSTREAM" which is a publication brought out by the first appellant may be set out. In the year 1960 a suit was filed by one Krishnaraj Thakersey against the weekly newspaper "BLITZ" and its Editor and others claiming Rs. 3 lakhs as damages for libel. The hearing in that suit commenced on the original side of the Bombay High Court on June 24, 1964. The delivery of the judgment commenced on January 19, 1965 and continued

till February 12, 1965. After June 24, 1964, that suit was heard from day to day by Mr. Justice Tarkunde. The suit was decreed in the sum of Rs. 3 lakhs. An appeal is pending before a division bench of the High Court against that judgment.

The impugned article is stated to have been contributed by a person under the name of "Scribbler" but appellant No. 2 has taken full responsibility for its publication. Its heading was "STORY OF LOAN and Blitz Thakersey Libel Case". It is unnecessary to reproduce the whole article which appears verbatim in the judgment of the High Court. The article has been ingeniously and clearly worded. The salient matters mentioned in the article are these :—

After paying a tribute to the Indian judiciary the writer says that according to the report in "PRAJATANTRA"—a Gujarati paper—a Firm of architects Khare-Tarkunde Private Limited of Nagpur, hereinafter called "Khare Tarkunde Company" (which is described a Firm in the article) got a loan facility of Rs. 10 lakhs from the Bank of India on December 7, 1964. The partners of Khare-Tarkunde include the father, two brothers and some other relations of justice Tarkunde who awarded a decree for Rs. 3 lakhs as damages against Blitz and in favour of Thakersey. It is pointed out that the date on which Rs. 10 lakhs loan facility was granted by the Bank of India was

about five and a half months after the Thackersey-Blitz libel suit had begun and just over six weeks before Justice Tarkunde began delivering his "marathon judgment" on January 9, 1965. It is then said that for Rs. 10 lakhs loan facility granted to Khare-Tarkunde, the New India Assurance Co. stood guarantee and that the two Directors of the Bank of India who voted in favour of the credit of Rs. 10 lakhs being granted to Khare-Tarkunde were Thackersey and Jaisinh Vithaldas (believed to be a relative of Thackersey). Next it is stated that one of the Directors of the New India Assurance that stood guarantee for the loan facility was N. K. Pettigara, who is also a senior partner of M/s. Mulla & Mulla Craigie Blunt & Caroe, Solicitors of Thackersey in the Blitz-Thackersey Libel Case before Justice Tarkunde. Emphasis is laid on the fact that Khare-Tarkunde has a capital of Rs. 5 lakhs only and the balance sheet of the firm of June 1964 revealed indebtedness to various financiers to the tune of Rs. 14 lakhs. Thus Khare-Tarkunde is "lucky to get against all this a handsome loan of Rs. 10 lakhs from the Bank of India". The writer refers to the Code among college teachers and university professors of not examining papers when their own children and near relatives sit for examination and add that Justice Tarkunde himself will recognize the rightness of such a code. Referring to the unimpeachable integrity and reputation of judges of the Bombay High Court, the writer proceeds to say "there must not be allowed to be raised even the faintest whisper of any misgiving on that score." Paragraph 24 deserves to be reproduced :

"If Sri Krishna Thackersey did not lay it bare at the time of the suit that he was one of the sponsors of a contract of which the judge's relations were the beneficiaries, it is up to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and the Bombay High Court including Justice Tarkunde as also the ever vigilant members of the Bar to consider all the implications of these disclosures which have distressed a common citizen like me, so that the finest traditions of our judiciary may be preserved intact."

A petition was filed before the Bombay High Court by the State of Maharashtra pointing out that the aforesaid article contained scandalous allegations and was calculated to obstruct the administration of justice and constituted gross contempt of court. The article purported to state certain facts relating to the transaction between Khare-Tarkunde and the bank which were false and there were several mis-statements and suppression of facts some of which were :

(a) The article wrongly stated that the father of Mr. Justice Tarkunde was a partner in Khare-Tarkunde ; and

(b) The article falsely described the transaction as a 'loan' by the Bank to Khare-Tarkunde.

In fact the said transaction was only a guarantee given by the Bank which under-took to pay to the Govt. any amount not exceeding Rs. 10 lakhs in the event of Khare-Tarkunde being unable to perform its obligations. The Bank was secured by a further guarantee given by the New India Assurance Co.

Ltd., undertaking to secure the Bank in the event of the Bank having to pay the said amount or any part thereof.

Appellant No. 2 who also happens to be a Director and Principal Officer of the first appellant, filed a reply raising some objections of a legal and technical nature and took up the position that the impugned article was based on a report published in PRAJATANTRA from which all the facts stated in the article were incorporated. It was asserted that certain 'major facts' had been verified by the appellant and found to be true. It was admitted that upon reading the petition for taking contempt proceedings it was found by appellant No. 2 that there were certain incorrect statements in the article. It was claimed that the article had been published in a *bona fide* belief that whatever was stated in the article in PRAJATANTRA was true. The intention was to convey to the public at large that it was incumbent on the plaintiff Thackersey and Pettigara, one of the partners of Mulla & Mulla etc., his attorneys to inform Justice Tarkunde that the plaintiff had voted for a resolution of the Board of Directors of the Bank of India which, without reasonable doubt would help Khare-Tarkunde in which Tarkunde happened to be a brother of the Judge.

The High Court analysed the implications of the facts stated in each paragraph of the impugned article in great detail and observed :

".....reading the article as a whole taking care not to read into it anything more than its plain language implies and making every allowance for Literary style and rhetorical flourish expressions which were often used in the arguments for the respondents it is impossible to avoid the conclusions that this article exceeds the bounds of fair and reasonable criticism. In "so far as it suggests that there is some sort of casual connection between the granting of the loan to M/s. Khare-Tarkunde Pvt. Ltd., and the judgment of Mr. Justice Tarkunde in the Blitz-Thackersey case, it clearly attempts to lower the learned judge in his judicial capacity not to mention the fact that it would also tend to shake the confidence of the lay public in the High Court and impair the due administration of justice in that court. In so far as there is a suggestion made it ever so faint that Mr. Justice Tarkunde knew or must have known of the loan to his brother's firm before he delivered the judgment in the case, the article is malicious and not in good faith."

The High Court also examined the mis-statements and inaccuracies in the impugned article and held that there was no foundation for the suggestion that Khare-Tarkunde was an impecunious firm and therefore was "Lucky" to get the handsome loan nor for the suggestion that either Thackersey and his co-Directors in the Bank of India or Thackersey's Solicitor and his co-Directors in the New India Assurance Co. went out of their way to grant accommodation to Khare-Tarkunde. The High Court found no basis for the insinuation that there was any connection between the loan and the judgment in the Blitz-Thackersey case or that Justice Tarkunde knew or might have known about any loan having been granted to his

brother's firm. No attempt was made to justify these suggestions in the return or in the argument before the High Court and all that was urged was that the words used by the contemnor did not give rise to the said imputations or innuendos and that the contemnor was only trying to communicate to the public at large what has been stated before. It is needless to refer to other points raised and decided by the High Court because none of them has been argued before us.

In this appeal, counsel for appellant No. 2 has made some attempt to establish that no aspersion was cast on the integrity of Justice Tarkunde in the article for was any imputation of dishonesty made. His second contention is that proceedings for contempt for scandalising a Judge have become obsolete and the proper remedy in such a situation is for the Judge to institute action for libel. Thirdly it is said that there was no evidence before the High Court that Justice Tarkunde did not know about the transaction or the dealings between the firm in which his brother was a partner and the bank of which Thackersey was a director. If, it is submitted, the allegations made in the article were truthful or had been made *bona fide* in the belief that they were truthful the High Court ought not to have found appellant No. 2 guilty of contempt. At any rate, according to counsel, the statement contained in the article only made out a charge of bias against the Judge and if such a charge is made it cannot be regarded as contempt.

On the first point our attention has been invited to the paragraphs in the article containing expression of high opinion held by the writer of the judiciary in India. It is suggested that his attempt was only to make a fair and legitimate criticism of the proceedings in the Thackersey's suit against the BLITZ weekly. It has been emphasised in the article that the damages which were awarded to the tune of Rs. 3 lakhs were almost punitive and that it was a rare phenomenon that the plaintiff (Thackersey) did not step into the witness box and also a permanent injunction had been granted preventing BLITZ from printing anything based on the subject matter of litigation. The law involving freedom of press fully warranted such criticism of a judgment or the proceedings in a suit in a court of law.

It is true that the writer of the article could exercise his right of fair and reasonable criticism and the matters which have been mentioned in some of the paragraphs may not justify any proceedings being taken for contempt but the article read as a whole leaves no doubt that the conclusions of the High Court were unexceptionable. It was a skilful attempt on the part of the writer to impute dishonesty and lack of integrity to Justice Tarkunde in the matter of Thackersey-Blitz suit, the imputation being indirect and mostly by innuendo that it was on account of the transaction and the dealings mentioned in the article that the suit of Thackersey was decreed in the sum of Rs. 3 lakhs which was the full amount of damages claimed by Thackersey. It may be that the article also suggests that Thackersey and his attorneys were to blame inasmuch as they did not inform the Judge about the transactions of Khare-

Tarkunde with the Bank of India with which Thackersey was associated in his capacity as a director but that cannot detract from the obvious implications and insinuations made in various paragraphs of the article which immediately create a strong prejudicial impact on the mind of the reader about the lack of honesty, integrity and impartiality on the part of Justice Tarkunde in deciding the Thackersey-Blitz suit.

On the second point counsel for appellant No. 2 has relied a great deal on certain decisions of the Privy Council and the Australian and American Court. In *In the matter of a Special Reference from the Bahama Islands* (1), a letter was published in a colonial newspaper containing sarcastic allusions to a refusal by the Chief Justice to accept a gift of pineapples. No judgement was given by the Privy Council but their lordships made a report to Her Majesty that the impugned letter though it might have been made subject of proceedings for libel was not, in the circumstances, calculated to obstruct or interfere with the course of justice or the due administration of law and, therefore, did not constitute contempt of court. In that case there was no question of scandalising the court nor had any imputation been made against the Chief Justice in respect of any judicial proceedings pending before him or disposed of in his court. It is the next decision of the Privy Council in *Mcleod v. St. Aubyn* (2) on which a great deal of argument has been built up before us that the courts, at least in England, have stopped committing anyone for contempt for publication of scandalising matter respecting the court after adjudication as well as pending a case before it. That case came by way of an appeal from an order of the Acting Chief Justice St. Aubyn of the Supreme Court of St. Vincent committing one Mcleod to prison for 14 days for alleged contempt of court. It was said *inter alia* in the impugned publications that in Mr. Trifford the public had no confidence and his *Locum tenens*, Mr. St. Aubyn was reducing the judicial character to the level of a clown. There were several other sarcastic and libelous remarks made about the Acting Chief Justice. While recognizing publications of scandalous matter of the court itself as a head of contempt of court as laid down by Lord Hardwicke in *re Read and Huggonson* (3), Lord Morris proceeded to make the oft-quoted observation "commitments for contempt of Court by itself have become obsolete in this court even though in small colonies consisting principally of coloured population commitments might be necessary in proper cases." Only a year later Lord Russell of Killowen C.J., in *The Queen v. Gray* (4) reaffirmed that any act done or writing published calculated to bring a court or a judge of the court in contempt, or to lower his authority, was a contempt of court. The learned Chief Justice made it clear that judges and courts were alike open to criticism and if reasonable argument or expostulation was offered against any judicial act as contrary to law or the public good no court could or would treat that as a contempt of court but it was to be remembered that the liberty of the press was not greater and no less than the liberty of every subject. In that case it

was held that there was personal scurrilous abuse of a Judge and it constituted contempt. All the three cases which have been discussed above were noticed by the Privy Council in *Debi Prasad Sharma & Ors. v. The King, Emperor* (5) where contempt proceedings had been taken in respect of editorial comments published in a newspaper based on a news item that the Chief Justice of Allahabad High Court in his administrative capacity had issued a circular to judicial officers enjoining on them to raise contributions to the war fund and it was suggested that he had done a thing which would lower the prestige of the court in the eyes of the public. This is what was said at page 224 :—

“In *In re a Special Reference from the Bahama Islands* (1893) A. C. 138, the test applied by the very strong Board which heard the reference was whether the words complained of were in the circumstances calculated to obstruct or interfere with the course of justice and the due administration of the law. In *Red. v. Gray* (1900) 2 Q.B. 36 it was shown that the offence of scandalising the court itself was not obsolete in this country. A very scandalous attack had been made on a judge for his judicial utterances while sitting in a criminal case on circuit, and it was with the foregoing opinions on record that Lord Russell of Killowen C.J. adopting the expression of Wilmot C.J. in his opinion in *Rex v. Almon* (1765) Wilmot's Notes of Opinions 243 which is the source of much of the present law on the subject, spoke of the article complained of as calculated to lower the authority of the judge.”

It is significant that their Lordships made a distinction between a case where there had been criticism of the administrative act of a Chief Justice and an imputation on him for having done or omitted to have done something in the administration of justice. It is further note-worthy that the law laid down in *McLeod v. St. Aubyn* (2) was not followed and it was emphasised that *Reg. v. Gray* (4) showed that the offence of scandalising the court itself was not obsolete in England. In *Rex v. Editor of New Statesman* (6) an article had been published in the NEW STATESMAN regarding the verdict by Mr. Justice Avory given in a libel action brought by the Editor of the MORNING POST against Dr. Maria Stopes (the well-known advocate of birth control) in which it was said, *inter-alia*, “the serious point in this case however is that an individual owing to such views as those of Dr. Maria Stopes cannot apparently hope for a fair hearing in a Court presided over by Mr. Justice Avory—and there are so many Avorys”. On behalf of the contemnor *McLeod v. St. Aubyn* was sought to be pressed into service. The Lord Chief Justice in delivering the judgment of the court said that the principle applicable to such cases was the one stated in *Reg. v. Gray* (4) and relied on the observations of Lord Russell at p. 40. It was observed that the article imputed unfairness and lack of impartiality to judge in the discharge of his judicial duties. The gravest of the offence was that by lowering his authority it interfered with the performance of his judicial functions. Again in *Amard v. Attorney General for Trinidad and Tobago* (7) the

law enunciated in *Reg. v. Gray* (4) by Lord Russell of Killowen was applied and it was said at page 335 :

“But whether the authority and position of an individual judge, or the due administration of justice, is concerned, no wrong is committed by any member of the public who exercises the ordinary right of criticising, in good faith, in private or public, the public act done in the seat of justice. The path of criticism is a public way ; the wrong headed are permitted to err therein ; provided that members of the public abstain from imputing improper motives to those taking part in the administration of justice, and are genuinely exercising a right of criticism, and not acting in malice or attempting to impair the administration of Justice, they are immune. Justice is not a cloistered virtue ; she must be allowed to suffer the scrutiny and respectful, even though outspoken, comments of ordinary men.”

It was, however, held that there was no evidence upon which the court could find that the alleged contemnor had exceeded fair and temperate criticism and that he had acted with untruth or malice and with the direct object of bringing the administration of justice into disrepute.

Lord Denning M.R. in *Reg. v. Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, Ex parte Blackburn* (No.2) (8) made some pertinent observations about the right of every man, in Parliament or out of it, in the Press or over the broadcast, to make fair and even outspoken comment, on matters of public interest. In the words of the Master of Rolls, “those who comment can deal faithfully with all that is done in a court of justice. They can say that we are mistaken, and our decisions erroneous, whether they are subject to appeal or not. All we would ask is that those who criticise us will remember that, from the nature of our office, we cannot reply to their criticism. We cannot enter into public controversy. Still less into political controversy. We must rely on our conduct itself to be its own vindication.” In that case Mr. Quintin Hogg had written an article in PUNCH in which he had been critical of the Court of Appeal and had even made some erroneous statements. But reading the article the salient passage of which is set out in the judgment of the Master of the Rolls makes it quite clear that there was no attempt to scandalise the court and impute any dishonourable or dishonest motives or to suggest any lack of integrity in any particular judge.

Oswald in his book on the Contempt of Court has expressed the view that it would be going a great deal too far to say that commitments for contempt of court by scandalising the Court itself have become obsolete, and that there does not seem to be any good reason for ignoring the principles which govern the numerous early cases on the subject.

The American and the Australian cases viz., *John D Pannekamp and The Miami Herald Publishing Co. v. State of Florida* (9) and *Bell v. Stewart* (10), to which reference has been made on behalf of appellant No. 2 can hardly be of much assistance because

in this country principles have become crystallized by the decisions of the High Courts and of this court in which the principles followed by English Courts have been mostly adopted.

We would now advert to the decisions of this court. It was held *Bathina Ramakrishna Reddy v. The State of Madras* (11) that the fact that the defamation of a judge of a subordinate Court constitutes an offence under s. 499 of the Indian Penal Code did not oust the jurisdiction of the High Court to take cognizance of the act as a contempt of court. In that case in an article in a Telugu weekly it was alleged that the Stationary Sub-Magistrate of Kovvur was known to the people of the locality for harassing litigants in various ways etc., Mukherjea J., (as he then was) who delivered the judgment described the article as a scurrilous attack on the integrity and honesty of a judicial officer. It was observed that if the allegations were false, they could not but undermine the confidence of the public in the administration of justice and bring the judiciary into disrepute. The appellant there had taken the sole responsibility regarding the publication of the article and was not in a position to substantiate by evidence any of the allegations made therein. It was held that he could not be said to have acted *bona fide*, "even if good faith can be held to be a defence at all in a proceeding for contempt." The decision in *re The Editor, Printer and Publisher of THE TIMES OF INDIA & In re Aswini Kumar Ghose and Anr. v. Arabinda Bose & Anr.* (12), is very opposite and may be next referred to. In a leading article in THE TIMES OF INDIA on the judgement of this Court in *Aswini Kumar Ghose v. Arabinda Bose & Anr.* (13) the burden was that if in a singularly oblique and infelicitous manner the Supreme Court had by a majority decision tolled the knell of the much maligned dual system prevailing in the Calcutta and Bombay High Courts by holding that the right to practise in any High Court conferred on advocates of the Supreme Court had made the rules in force in those High Courts requiring advocates appearing on the original side to be instructed by attorneys inapplicable to them. This is what was said by Mahajan J., (as he then was) speaking for the court:

"No objection could have been taken to the article had it merely preached to the courts of law the sermon of divine detachment. But when it proceeded to attribute improper motives to the Judges, it not only transgressed the limits of fair and *bonafide* criticism but had a clear tendency to affect the dignity and prestige of this court. The article in question was thus a gross contempt of court. It is obvious that if an impression is created in the minds of the public that the judges in the highest court in the land act on extraneous considerations in deciding cases, the confidence of the whole community in the administration of justice is bound to be undermined and no greater mischief than that can possibly be imagined."

The Editor, Printer and Publisher of the newspaper rendered an apology which was accepted, but this court concurred in the expression of views in

Ambard v. Attorney General of Trinidad (7), a passage from which has already been extracted. The guiding principles to be followed by courts in contempt proceedings were enunciated in *Brahma Prakash Sharma and Ors. v. The State of Uttar Pradesh* (14). The judgment again was delivered by Mukherjea J., (as he then was) and the English decisions including those of the Privy Council were discussed. It is necessary to refer only to the principles laid down for cases of the present kind *i.e.* scandalising the court. It has been observed that there are two primary considerations which should weigh with the court when it is called upon to exercise summary power in cases of contempt committed by "scandalising" the court itself. In the first place, the reflection on the conduct or character of a judge in reference to the discharge of his judicial duties would not be contempt, if such reflection is made in the exercise of the right of fair and reasonable criticism which every citizen possesses in respect of public acts done in the seat of justice. Secondly, when attacks or comments are made on a judge or Judges disparaging in character and derogatory to their dignity, care should be taken to distinguish between what is a libel on a judge and what really amounts to contempt of court. If, however, the publication of the disparaging statement is calculated to interfere with the due course of justice or proper administration of law by such court, it can be punished summarily as contempt. "It will be an injury to the public if it tends to create an apprehension in the minds of the people regarding the integrity, ability or fairness of the judge or to deter actual and prospective litigants from placing complete reliance upon the court's administration of justice, or if it is likely to cause embarrassment in the mind of the judge himself in the discharge of his judicial duties. It is well established that it is not necessary to prove affirmatively that there has been an actual interference with the administration of justice by reason of such defamatory statement; it is enough if it is likely, or tends in any way to interfere with the proper administration of law." In that case it was held that the contempt was of a technical nature. This was based apparently on the reason that the Members of the Bar who had passed a resolution attributing incompetency, lack of courtesy etc. and had referred to complaints against two officers, one a Judicial Magistrate and the other a Revenue Officer and had sent those complaints to the District Magistrate, Commissioner and the Chief Secretary in the State and secondly because very little publicity had been given to the statement.

In *re. Hira Lal Dixit & two Ors.* (15), the above principles were applied and reaffirmed. In that case words which had been used in a poster which was published had the necessary implication that the judges who decided in favour of the Government were rewarded by the Government with appointments to this court. Although this case was not one of scandalizing of the court but the question that was posed was whether the offending passage was of such character and import or made in such circumstances as would tend to hinder or obstruct or interfere with the due course of administration of justice by this court and it was answered in the affirmative and the

contemnor was held guilty of Contempt of Court. In *State of Madhya Pradesh v. Revashankar* (16) an application was made under s. 528 of the Code of Criminal Procedure in certain criminal proceedings containing serious aspersions against a Magistrate, Mr. N.K. Acharya. Reliance was once again placed on *Brahma Prakash Sharma's* (14) case and the principles laid therein. It was held that the aspersions which had been made amounted to something more than a mere intentional personal insult to the Magistrate; they scandalised the court itself and impaired the administration of justice and that proceedings under the contempt of court could be taken against the contemnor.

There can be no manner of doubt that in this country the principles which should govern cases of the present kind are now fully settled by the previous decisions of this court. We may restate the result of the discussion of the above cases on this head of contempt which is by no means exhaustive.

(1) It will not be right to say that committals for contempt for scandalising the court have become obsolete:

(2) The summary jurisdiction by way of contempt must be exercised with great care and caution and only when its exercise is necessary for the proper administration of law and justice.

(3) It is open to anyone to express fair, reasonable and legitimate criticism of any act or conduct of a judge in his judicial capacity or even to make proper and fair comment on any decision given by him because "justice is not a cloistered virtue and she must be allowed to suffer the scrutiny and respectful, even though outspoken, comments of ordinary men."

(4) A distinction must be made between a mere libel or defamation of a judge and what amounts to a contempt of the court. The test in each case would be whether the impugned publication is a mere defamatory attack on the judge or whether it is calculated to interfere with the due course of justice or proper administration of law by his court. It is only in the latter case that it will be punishable as Contempt.

(5) Alternatively the test will be whether the wrong is done to the judge personally or it is done to the public. To borrow from the language of Mukherjea J. (as he then was) '*Brahma Prakash Sharma's case* (14) the publication of disparaging statement will be an injury to the public if it tends to create an apprehension in the minds of the people regarding the integrity, ability or fairness of the judge or to deter actual and prospective litigents from placing complete reliance upon the court's embarrassment in the mind of the judge himself in the discharge of his judicial duties.

As regards the third contention no attempt was made before the High Court to substantiate that the facts stated in the article were true or were founded on correct data. It may be that truthfulness or factual correctness is a good defence in an action for libel, but in the law of contempt there are hardly any English or Indian cases in which such defence has been recognized. It is true that

in the case of *Bhathina Ramakrishna Reddy* (11) there was some discussion about the bona-fides of the person responsible for the publication but that was apparently done to dispose of the contention which had been raised on the point. It is quite clear that the submission made was considered on the assumption that good faith can be held to be a defence in a proceeding for contempt. The words "even if good faith can be held to be a defence at all in a proceeding for contempt" show that this court did not lay down affirmatively that good faith can be set up as a defence in contempt proceedings. At any rate, this point is merely of academic interest because no attempt was made before the High Court to establish the truthfulness of the facts stated in the article. On the other hand, it was established that some of the material allegations were altogether wrong and incorrect.

Lastly the submission that the statements contained in the article made out only a charge of bias against the judge and this cannot constitute contempt, has to be stated to be rejected. It is a new point and was never raised before the High Court. Moreover the suggestion that the charge in the article was of legal bias which meant that Justice Tarkunde had some sort of pecuniary interest in Khare-Tarkunde which had the transactions with the bank of which Thackersey was a Director is wholly baseless. Counsel had to agree that Justice Tarkunde was neither a share-holder nor was there anything to show that he had any other interest in Khare-Tharkunde. The mere fact that his brother happens to have a holding in it cannot per se establish that Justice Tarkunde would also have some financial or pecuniary interest therein. It is not possible to accept nor has such extreme position been taken by the counsel for appellant No. 2 that there is any bar to a brother or near relation of a judge from carrying on any business, profession or avocation. The entire argument on this point is wholly without substance.

The appellant No. 2 showed no contribution in the matter of publication of the impugned article. He never even tendered an unqualified apology. The High Court, in these circumstances, was fully justified in punishing him for contempt of court and in awarding the sentence which was imposed. In the impugned article there was a clear imputation of impropriety, lack of integrity and oblique motives to Justice Tarkunde in the matter of deciding the Thackersey-Blitz suit which, on the principles already stated, undoubtedly constituted contempt of court. The appeal fails and is hereby dismissed.

J. C. SHAH J.
V. RAMASWAMI J.
A. N. GROVER J.

November 19, 1968

(1) 1893 A.C. 138. (2) 1899 A.C. 549. (3) 2 Atk. 471, (4) (1900) 2 Q. B.D. 36. (5) 70 I.A. 216. (6) (1928) 44 T.L.R. 301. (7) (1936) A.C. 322. (8) (1968) 2 W.L.R. 1206. (9) 328 U.S. 331. (10) 28 Com. L.R. 419. (11) (1952) S.C.R. 425. (12) (1953) S.C.R. 215. (13) (1953) S.C.R. 1. (14) (1953) S.C.R. 1169. (15) (1955) I.S.C.R. 677. (16) (1959) S.C.R. 1367.

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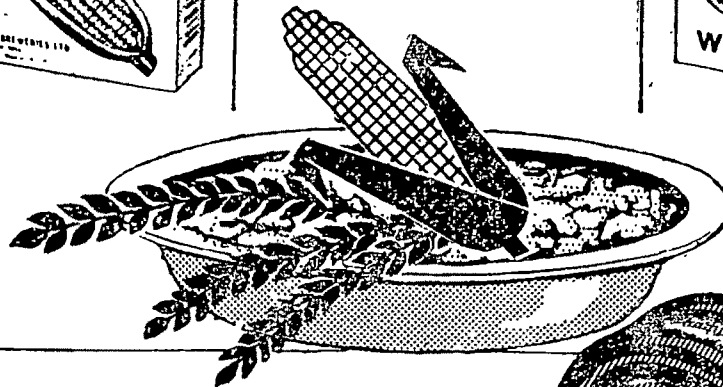
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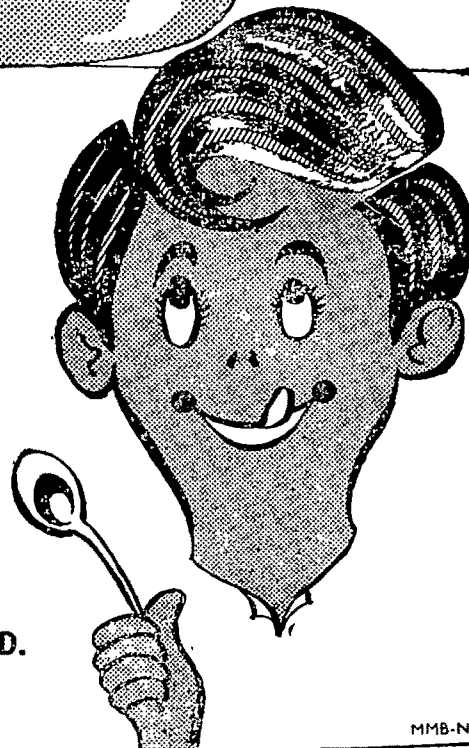


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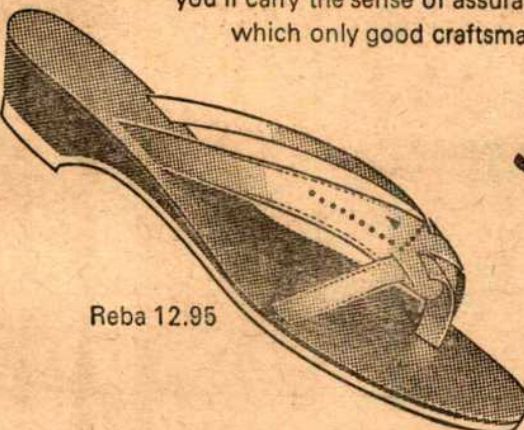


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OFFICE-HUNTERS ALL

EVEN as the Congress Government in Haryana was tottering following defection by the Bhagwat Dayal faction, and the central leadership of the party was frantically trying to help Sri Bansi Lal manage sufficient support in the Legislature to stay on in office, Congress President Nijalingappa was holding forth to a press correspondent on his pet theory that the Congress alone is capable of providing "stable" administration. This attitude is typical of the present Congress leadership which has neither the intention nor the capacity to learn from experience and whose aim and end in politics is manoeuvre and manipulation to retain or regain power.

The developments in Haryana have had nothing to do with principle or ideology; it was no more or less than a naked struggle for power, with no holds barred. Neither faction can claim moral superiority over the other; both have proved equally capable of horse-trading, the only difference being that one had the full backing of the central leadership while the other squirmed at its rejection and worked its way to vengeance.

In these circumstances it was amusing to find Sri Nijalingappa assuming an air of profound virtue and proclaiming that "the performance of non-Congress Governments composed of parties with divergent views has convinced people that only the Congress can provide a stable set-up." The absurdity of this claim is demonstrated by the kind of atmosphere that has prevailed in Haryana ever since Sri Bansi Lal was installed as Chief Minister, with Sri Bhagwat Dayal and his group engaged constantly in undermining the prestige and strength of the Centre-backed set-up.

The "people", whom Sri Nijalingappa and other Congress leaders always take for granted despite the Fourth General Election, have little reason to shed tears over Sri Bansi Lal or to hug Sri Bhagwat Dayal. One wants to be the boss with Central support and blessing, while the other is chagrined that he is no longer boss. Neither has so far shown concern for the public interest or the capacity to serve it honestly.

The differences that arose in some of the non-Congress Governments, weakening these considerably, arose from differences in policies, although the downfall of some of them was brought about not by these differences alone but by Central trickery and misuse of the Governors. But the differences that have led to the cracking up of the Congress Party in various States, Haryana being the latest, have invariably been the result of a shameless scramble for power. It is a notorious fact that the persons who defected

from the Congress throughout the last twenty months did so to gain office which the Congress had denied them. Such is the party which Sri Nijalingappa wants the people to believe can provide "stability".

No one who has been following the kind of preparations the Congress Party has been making for the mid-term elections in four States will believe that the party aims at anything but power for the sake of the privileged position it gives to the office-hunters who are dominant in the Congress today. Sri C.B. Gupta's humiliation had little to do with cleansing the party of undesirable elements opposed to its professed policy aims, but was the result of the compulsions of power equations within the party at the organisational as well as administrative level. That the Congress is in no position to divest itself of the State bosses is fully borne out by the support Sri Atulya Ghosh received for his list of Congress candidates for the West Bengal poll. Even Sri Gupta could not have his way in regard to some names only because the Prime Minister found it necessary to assert herself for factional reasons. But while she has perhaps established that she is not a factor who can be ignored, the way the lists have been handled at the Centre shows clearly that the State bosses are not without powerful support.

The demand by the younger Congressmen of Bihar for the elimination of old fogeys and bringing in of younger, progressive persons into the legislatures is therefore little more than a cry in the wilderness.

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What will decide the choice of candidates so far as the Congress is concerned is not dedication to the principles for which the party is supposed to stand, but the usefulness or otherwise of those selected to the important factions and their bosses in the States as well as at the Centre.

The handful of forward-looking elements who may secure the "ticket" will be as ineffective in the shaping or implementation of policies as the Left-inclined Congressmen in Parliament who, despite strenuous efforts, have been unable to secure the abolition of privy purses or ensure speeding up of the investigation of Birla affairs. At the Centre their position is so difficult in fact that Sri Morarji Desai was recently emboldened to ask them to quit the party instead of demanding that it stand by its solemn pledges.

The selection of candidates, which is no more than a euphemism for endorsing the lists produced by the State bosses for their own benefit, as also the events in Haryana must serve as a warning to the younger Congressmen who still believe that the Congress can yet be transformed into an instrument of social and economic change as envisaged by some of its greatest leaders in the past. They have to consider whether indeed the Congress can be reformed

and the enemies of the people within it driven out merely by lobbying at the top or by occasional outbursts in Parliament or the State legislatures. The answer seems clearly to be in the negative.

What is required, if the Congress is to be saved from the Patils, Morarjis, Atulya Ghoshes and C. B. Guptas, is a massive revolt by the rank and file to demand implementation of the many rosy promises the party has been making over long years. The movement has to be one for exposing the corruption and alliances with big business which have reduced the party to the status of an appendage of the private sector and its foreign patrons. It is not securing of the Congress "ticket" that can change the character or direction of the party, for it has been demonstrated that even the idealists in the party quite often get entrapped in faction politics and become incapable of standing up for principle on one issue or another. Unless the younger Congressmen have the courage and determination needed to dissociate themselves firmly from the rivalries among the entrenched leaders of the party and build up their own strength among the common people, before long they will find themselves totally insignificant quantities or will become part of the Establishment, while the people will draw their own conclusions and act accordingly.

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

ELITE RELATIONSHIPS AND POWER

RECENTLY the diplomat son of a prominent Congress leader was appointed Indian envoy to a country with which the Government is quietly trying to open a dialogue in the hope that it might pave the way for improvement in relations. The choice of diplomat for this difficult assignment was determined by the fact that his father enjoys the confidence of the Prime Minister, and it is believed in the diplomatic world that the newly appointed envoy has direct access to the present head of the Indian Government. It is said that this fact will not only enhance his prestige in the country to which he has been assigned, but will also add weight to his moves in pursuance of the Government's objective.

It must be added here that in selecting the concerned diplomat

for the assignment no favouritism was shown to him; he got his due and his father did not want any favour to be shown to him. Nor is this the only appointment in the world of diplomacy in which the relationship of the envoy with the head of the Government has been taken into consideration; many instances can be cited from different countries of career-diplomats being assigned to specific jobs because of their political status. This case shows the importance which political relations are acquiring in our country.

In the past the higher services were dominated by persons who came not merely from certain social groups but also from certain families or were related to one another after entering the services. There was a Chief Secretary in a State who had a num-

ber of daughters and all of them were married to ICS officers. Then there were the Tayyabjis from Bombay and the Chetturs from Kerala. And a close scrutiny will show that a large number of our IFS officers are inter-related; there are fathers and sons, brothers-in-law, and uncles and cousins among them, as in all other foreign services.

In politics family relations became important quite some time back. Smt Indira Gandhi in all-India politics and Sri Satyendra Narain Sinha in Bihar politics rose to positions of responsibility in their own right but there are sons, nephews and sons-in-law of many Central Ministers, Chief Ministers and State Ministers who owe their present positions to their relations. The UP Congress list, which was released last week, includes the names of

Sri Kranti Kumar who is the son of Sri Govind Sahai, Sri Chandra Mohan Singh who is the son of Sri Jag Mohan Singh Negi, and Sri Priyadarshi Jetly who is the son of Dr. Jetly. Anyone acquainted with UP politics is aware of the eminent positions the fathers of these three candidates occupied in the State Congress. There are several others in the list who have been selected not because of their own standing or work but because of their family connections with Congress leaders.

What is new in the case of the diplomat son of a Congress leader is that political relations are now becoming important in the services also. Further, his case suggests that our country's political elite and the elite in the civil services cannot for long remain two exclusive sets but are bound to get inter-related. Incidentally, the brother of the diplomat to whom reference has been made earlier, holds a senior post in our Intelligence services, where also the question of personal political loyalties is involved. And in the UP list there are also names of persons who are close relatives of certain important civil servants holding key positions at decision-making levels.

This kind of inter-relationship between the two elite sets is a common phenomenon in other countries, but in India it had not developed because of the hostility between the political leadership

and the bureaucracy in the pre-Independence days and its hang-over in the years after freedom. The working relations between political leaders and the civil servants after Independence might have been cordial, though not in every case, but the two remained suspicious of each other and at times held each other in contempt. It is not a secret that a Chief Minister deliberately kept senior Secretaries waiting for hours, and when he called them in, talked to them curtly and dismissed them in a few minutes—only to show them their place; the result was that almost every self-respecting and independent senior civil servant got himself transferred during the Chief Minister's regime which lasted nearly nine years, and the administration of the State deteriorated, while at the Centre these civil servants proved successful administrators.

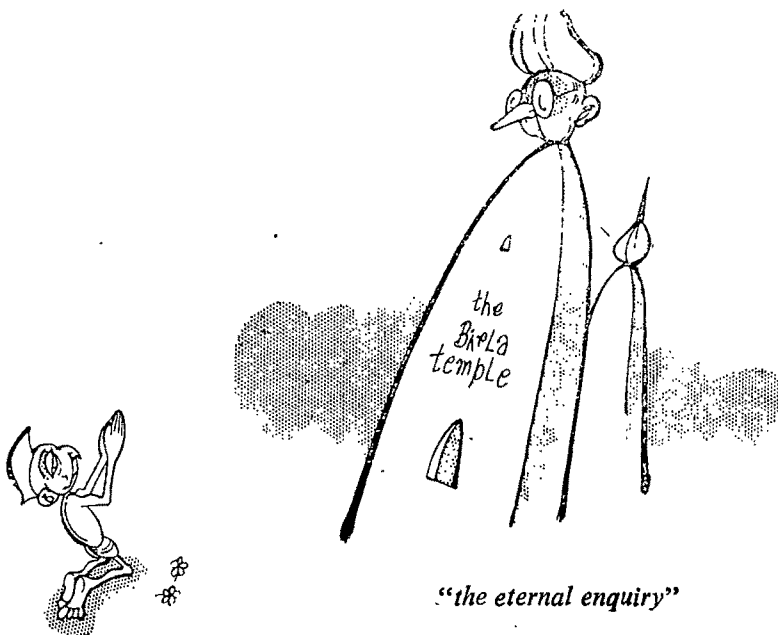
In India also inter-relationship between the political elite and the elite in the civil services was bound to develop sooner or later; politics cannot absorb all the sons, nephews and sons-in-law of political leaders and many a retired civil servant with relations in the services has taken to politics in recent years. The relationship between the two sets should lead to their fusion, and in any case mutual suspicion and contempt should disappear and relations between them should improve as the process develops. But a complicating factor is the

emergence of non-Congress Governments in States. Relations of Congress leaders in the services may adopt the correct attitude towards a non-Congress Ministry, but they will be looked upon with greater suspicion than others in the services, by the Ministers; and for the officials themselves it is bound to be difficult to adopt the kind of impersonal attitude towards administrative matters which ICS officers with no political links could in the years after independence.

This is an aspect of the problem which should receive the attention of both political leaders and administrators. A solution should not be difficult because the leadership of the non-Congress parties which were involved in the freedom struggle also comes from the same social groups from which the Congress leadership is drawn, and any number of instances can be cited of sons and nephews of Congress leaders holding leading positions in such parties; in Bihar, the son of a former Congress Minister was a Communist Minister in the SVD Government. As far as the parties like Swatantra and Jana Sangh, which were not involved in the freedom struggle, are concerned, their leaders are drawn largely from the same families as the civil servants, and a conflict is not likely to arise. If a solution is not found to the conflict in the loyalties of civil servants, a situation might arise—as it in fact did during the United Front Government in West Bengal and the SVD Government in Bihar—when the services and the Ministry pull in different directions. A situation more or less of this kind is developing in Kerala.

Two other factors complicate the situation. One is the infiltration of the services by the RSS which has been going on quietly and in an organised manner for a long time. The other is the existing relationship between the higher services and big business houses which again is nothing peculiar to our country. It is time social scientists studied these relationships and the many problems arising therefrom.

—G.M.



Pakistan Today : Illusion and Reality

DEWAN BERINDRANATH

RECENT happenings in Pakistan took the world by surprise. This was because of two reasons. Firstly, the disturbed area was of West Pakistan, considered the seat of power and abode of conservative reaction. The possibility of any trouble in such a region was considered remote.

Secondly, those arraigned against the regime were least expected to do so. Unlike the politicians of yester-years like Ch. Mohammed Ali, Mumtaz Daultana and Abdul Qayyum Khan, some of the present dissidents had made considerable gains from the present regime. Both the principal adversaries of President Ayub Khan owe a great deal to his patronage. Neither Mr. Bhutto nor Air Marshal Asghar Khan would have had the importance which they now enjoy, had not President Ayub been extremely generous towards them. The ex-Foreign Minister particularly owes a great deal to the 'personal discovery' his former Boss had made of him way back in 1960.

Seen in this light the present trouble could be interpreted as a case of in-fighting among the forces in the Palace. It could be described as the usual drama of court-intrigue witnessed in medieval times, when the ruler seemed on his way out. It is probable that with the deteriorating health of President Ayub Khan, many of the hopefuls for succession have now become desperate due to their being out-manoeuvred by their opponents. Rivalries between Bhutto and Musa on the one hand and Asghar Khan and the present Air Force Chief, Nur Khan on the other, are well-known in Pakistani political circles.

Nobody can also rule out the possibility of further dissensions among the Pakistani ruling class in the days to come. It is probable that a few more members of President Ayub's entourage might get frustrated on the knowledge that they stand no chance if they continue to remain inside the Palace. The Moghul history is full of incidents about the double-dealers who tried to be popular with the people and Palace at the same time.

This theory of Pakistani troubles being merely an expression of inner frustration of a class which has come to be associated with power in Rawalpindi is further strengthened by the fact that the present opponents of the regime offer no ideology or philosophy worth the name. Their only slogan is the restoration of Parliamentary democracy. For the time being, such slogans might satisfy the angry masses but it would be extremely difficult for the opponents of the regime to reconcile for a long time such mutually contending movements like those of Islamic revivalism, progressive liberalism, regional autonomy and strong centrism. It is obvious that President Ayub banks upon such inherent drawbacks in the movement in his opposition.

According to the calculations of Rawalpindi, the storm is likely to blow over once the initial anger of the youngsters is subsided, and men like Bhutto and Asghar Khan settle down to divide leaves and fishes in terms of popular leadership. There has already been a talk that Asghar Khan has jumped into the political arena on Ayub Khan's own bidding. Significantly enough *Pakistan Times*,

now considered the most authentic voice of the regime, has hinted that far from being disturbed, Islamabad welcomes Air Marshal Asghar Khan's entry into politics. He can be relied upon to work as a restraining influence over hot-heads and give the samblance of a continuity of a military-based regime in case a change becomes inevitable. This comment could well be meant to create seeds of dissensions among those who have taken to the Air Marshal as the man of the hour. There is however no denying that Mr. Bhutto more than President Ayub would be feeling disturbed over the sudden rise in popularity of the ex-Air Force Chief. Civilian politicians would not feel happy over the assumption of leadership by a military man who was considered a member of the ruling Junta only till a few months ago.

Even the entry of a well-respected East Pakistani, Ex-Chief Justice Mehboob Murshed should not be made too much of. His strength lies in the fact that he does not belong to any party. This might also mean a great weakness for him in case he develops political ambitions of a more tangible nature. The only relevance of a man like Justice Mehboob Murshed's entry into the fray of political controversy is that he would tend to articulate the anti-regime feeling of the intelligentsia, especially in East Pakistan.

This also might create a better rapport between the opposition movement in the two wings. For the time being, a major weakness of the anti-Ayub movement is the fact that there is hardly any liaison between the trouble

makers in the two wings. In fact the more important leaders of the Opposition in East and West Pakistan are beset with acute political and personal differences. Obviously there can be little meeting ground between men like Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rahman and Maulana Madoodi. Even the progressive leaders of the two wings hardly see eye to eye. While most of the units of the National Awami Party in West Pakistan have chosen to be nationalist and pro-Soviet under the leadership of Khan Abdul Wali Khan, son of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Maulana Bhashani in East Pakistan has become the leader of the pro-Peking elements and has 'expelled' Wali Khan and others from the party.

It is also significant that while the trouble has been going on in West Pakistan, the Eastern region has remained comparatively quite. This is perhaps due to the fact that the East has been terroised into the belief that the Government means business in dealing with its opponents. If it could crush powerful elements in the very heart of Pakistan and feel little danger from men like Bhutto and Asghar Khan, it can also deal decisively with voices of dissent in East Pakistan.

More importantly East Pakistan's comparative calm is explained by the fact that the troubles in the Western region have not evoked sufficient sympathy in the East. This may also be due to the fact that East Pakistan has been vastly devastated due to the recent floods and cyclones and the peasantry has little time at hand for political agitation. Whatever might be the reason, East Pakistani quietude, notwithstanding Justice Mehboob Murshed's call for democratic action, has proved a blessing for the regime in more ways than one.

The above analysis does not however mean that the regime has nothing to fear. It only shows that for the time being, the impact of happenings in West Pakistan should not be exaggerated. Even though the regime might withstand the shock of present disturbances, and there

are indications that it would, things will not be the same again. It will no longer be possible for Rawalpindi to take West Pakistan for granted. From Rawalpindi's point of view, the danger does not lie in the popular ferment in Dacca. Every movement for democratic rights in East Pakistan could conveniently be explained away as a pro-Indian conspiracy to the gullible West Pakistanis. The position of West Pakistan is entirely different. The men who head the movement have impeccable bonafides as proven leaders of anti-Indian sentiment. There is hardly any Hindu minority to be accused of as links in the alleged conspiracy. Afghanistan could, of course, be conveniently dragged in. But that stratagem of publicity has little impact over the minds of the youth in Punjab. Hence the helplessness of the regime in facing up the challenge.

The challenge does not however lie in the possibility of a debacle in the forthcoming Presidential election. The Basic Democratic Constitution laboriously devised by the lawyers like Manzur Qadir is a fool-proof device against any "eventuality" of a peaceful change-over. Significantly enough neither Asghar Khan nor Mehbood Murshed have even claimed that they hope to replace the man in power by fighting the elections. The chances are that even if the Opposition fights the elections in a united manner, it will be for the sake of educating public opinion without the illusion of being able to walk into the President House.

What is the Danger ?

The question now arises is what then is the danger facing President Ayub Khan? It has been suggested that he has gone old and weak and will not be able to withstand the rigours of electioneering. Superficial analysts of Pakistani scene have also tried to draw the conclusion that President Ayub will honourably retire from the scene. If he does, he will certainly set an example for every dictator in the world. But this has seldom

happened. Power cannot so easily be discarded. Moreover his health does not seem to be in such a precarious state, as not to allow him to manage an election show. One is thus not impressed with some recent conjectures in the Indian press taken mostly from the British sources regarding the future politics of Pakistan after the entry of Air Marshal Asghar Khan on the scene. Asghar Khan or no Asghar Khan, President Ayub would see to it that power remains securely in his own hands. Those whose only window on Pakistan has been a couple of English language newspapers from that country, might be tempted to read too much into the favourable comments made about Asghar Khan in the pro-Government press. One should take such references with a pinch of salt. These might very well be to discredit Asghar Khan before the people. In any case, the world has yet to see the spectacle of a dictator making a present of his power to his detractors.

The real danger facing Ayub Khan is neither the possibility of defeat in presidential election nor his intention to retire honourably. The challenge lies in the rise of a class which the rulers have themselves helped to emerge during the last ten years. Politics in West Pakistan has undergone a radical change during the last decade. Power is no longer dependent on the manoeuvring by a few shrewd men belonging to feudal aristocracy or the military high command. An intense process of urbanisation—even though its magnitude in terms of total population is not impressive—has made a great impact in West Pakistan. An indigenous middle class which had almost become extinct after the creation of Pakistan is fast asserting itself. The middle class is coming into conflict with the feudal politicians on the one hand and the pro-Ayub brass hats on the other.

The most important thing to remember about the trouble in Pakistan is that it is not the mere expression of individual ambitions of a few disgruntled men out of office. It is a symptom of the irreconcilable demands for power

made by the newly emerging socio-economic forces against all those who stand for the status quo. Men like Bhutto and Asghar Khan are only articulating the feeling of discontent which the middle class has been expressing over a system which provides no scope for their participation in the process of political power.

The professional classes, technocrats and other members of intelligentsia had something to look forward to ten years ago. Their number then was infinitely small compared to the demand for their skills. Today it is no longer so. Educated unemployment has become as acute as in India. The youth being educated in colleges and schools is no longer under the illusion of a bright future in the form of cushy jobs at home and scholarships abroad. Ten years of economic planning aiming at quick results by emphasising the growth of consumer industries, and expansion in agriculture have brought in an economic phenomenon of near stagnation. Alongwith the middle class there has also risen a small but comparatively well-organised working class.

Whatever concessions big or small, President Ayub might make to soothe feelings here and there, he cannot definitely satisfy the demands of those who want a direct share in state power. His system of Basic Democracy worked on the assumption that there would always remain a small class having vested interests in the maintenance of the status quo. This class was largely represented by the more prosperous section of the Punjabi farmers who have been traditional leaders of rural communities, specially in areas like West Punjab. It was easy for the regime to make a working arrangement with such groups through bureaucratic machinery of the State. The members of bureaucracy in their turn were mostly drawn from that very class. This class of the rural-rich had also provided the top men in the Army. Top politicians with few exceptions mainly came either directly from this very class, or were dependent on its favours. The kingpin of President Ayub's system was to provide avenues

of leadership to these very people who can manoeuvre support for the boss in Rawalpindi in exchange of the large official and political patronage given to them through a system which made them virtual 'Viceroys' in their own areas of influence.

During the last four or five years the situation has changed a great deal. Apart from the rise of a vociferous middle class, even the political landscape of the rural areas has changed a great deal. Policies of modernisation of agriculture, on however limited a scale they might be at the moment, have brought in a new class of progressive farmers who are not much dependent on official patronage. The young farmer who has taken to agriculture after obtaining a college degree is neither over-awed nor inspired by his more senior counterparts so long considered major props of the regime. A demand is growing that the rural leadership should belong to the comparatively better educated younger farmers. In most cases such a farmer has become self-sufficient. He has already a tube-well and a tractor and does not need much by way of any official subsidy. Hence, he could neither be bought over nor terrorised by the traditional methods of political manoeuvrings practised in the area for the last half a century.

An Important Trend

Another trend of utmost importance is the emergence of a working liaison among various movements of dissent. Till recently there had hardly existed any rapport among movements such as Pakhtoonistan, Sind Awami Tehrik and a general upsurge for the restoration of Parliamentary democracy. Trade unions, Kisan Committees and other progressive elements were suspicious of the Right-wing leadership of the Muslim league and such bodies. Ideological difference in the ranks of the Opposition were too strong to permit the formation of a United Front. But the force of events especially the emergence of younger leadership which like its counter-parts almost all over the world, has little love for ideologi-

cal debates, has tended to change the position to a great extent. The youth especially has no love for the politicians of the past, and is thus not impressed by the claims of the regime that it has provided Pakistan with stability by getting rid of the old politicians.

In this respect, the Opposition has indirectly been helped by the policies of high-handedness which through indiscriminate persecution of all the radical elements has brought about a working alliance among the forces of opposition. So strong seems to be the sentiment for united action, that even if the leaders might still be beset with dissensions the workers and in fact the masses would forge a unity of their own. This again is a radical development which has conspicuously been missing in the assessment by the political observers in this country. Its effects on the political scene in Pakistan could be deep as well as far-reaching. The association of the Pakhtoon movement as well as of various elements in the "Azad Kashmir" has provided a mass base for the anti-Ayub movement. It no longer remains confined to the Bar Libraries, the schools and colleges.

Another trend of utmost importance is the emergence of a new class of young officers in the armed forces. Thanks to an immense expansion in the ranks of the Army and the Air Force, these services no longer remain preserves for the feudal offspring. A large number of the younger officers belong to the urban middle class and have been assuming positions of importance. The Air Force particularly is open to such influences. Asghar Khan's entry into the scene should thus be seen in the light of the new process of "declassification" in the armed forces. The only saving grace for President Ayub Khan is that at the moment these officers have not reached positions of crucial importance. Within the next few years however, the situation is going to change radically. There would remain perhaps no group in the armed forces having any inherent ties of loyalty with the Ayub Junta. The younger officers have yet to develop an ideology or political philosophy. At the

moment they are prone to be influenced by any man whether Bhutto or Asghar Khan, who promises a radical change in the running of the affairs of the State.

It is in this respect that the challenge to Ayub's authority

which has expressed itself in various movements of dissent, should be read more as a symptom of deep-rooted malady than a signal for an immediate change. Change there, shall be. But, it will not be on the lines suggested

by political pundits who take the present political set-up of Pakistan for granted. A change in the personnel in the President's House is unlikely to be accomplished without a change in the system.

ECONOMIC NOTEBOOK

INDO-SOVIET CO-OPERATION : NEW PHASE

WHAT is the perspective for Indo-Soviet economic co-operation? This extremely important question is being discussed with considerable seriousness at the official and non-official levels in India, and is probably also engaging the attention of the Soviet leaders. The current visit of a high-power Soviet delegation led by the Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Economic Relations with Foreign Countries emphasized the deep interest in this crucial issue.

The heady days of rapid and uninterrupted quantitative growth of Indo-Soviet economic co-operation and trade, initiated in the mid-fifties, at the time of launching India's Second Five-Year Plan with its accent on rapid industrialisation, specially in the heavy, metallurgical sector, naturally came to a close with the halt of that phase of our planned development by mid-sixties. This was a rich and rewarding effort and has impressive successes to its credit, having made it possible for this country to make a significant break-through in several crucial sectors in the industrial structure and establish important, productive assets within it, which would have been impossible to create in so short a time but for Soviet assistance.

Without in any way detracting from the great achievements, however, the fact cannot

be ignored that Indo-Soviet economic co-operation in the specific forms in which it has operated so far has now nearly exhausted its potential, both in scope and momentum. This expresses itself sharply in the field of Soviet economic aid as well as trade. It has clearly become necessary to search for new, higher and more complex forms if it is to regain its vitality and further growth potential. This is necessary, too, especially for India. For, the Soviet Union—a friendly country—is not only a great military power but also a big economy and a huge market, and India cannot conceive of a situation where it will allow its profitable economic relations with such a country to stagnate.

The necessary changes towards more suitable forms of co-operation in tune with the existing economic situation in both countries and the state of their development could have come about smoothly and without any strain but for the fact that the close of the first phase also coincided with the emergence of extremely severe strains in the Indian economy and a sharp slowing down of planned economic development. The stagnation in the Indian economy tended to preclude expansion of Indo-Soviet economic co-operation which by its very nature was directly and

purposefully oriented from the start to the needs of a rapid developmental process, especially in the field of industrialisation. It is revealing that both our trade with the Socialist countries including the USSR, and Soviet aid, even when readily available, have shown hardly any expansion in the last three years of halt in planned development in India. In fact, the new large credits pledged to India by the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries of Eastern Europe have largely remained unutilised in the last three years.

When the Third Plan was coming to a close and our planners were struggling with the problems of formulation of the Fourth Plan, still largely under the spell of old assumptions and projections, the Soviet Union, unlike the Western countries which were beginning to come into the open to lay down conditions and demand policy changes as the price for aid, quite readily and unconditionally announced a further 300 million rouble (equal to about Rs. 250 crores) general credit for the Fourth Plan. An elaborate list of projects and programmes was drawn up to be taken up with this assistance. All this proved abortive as India's economic situation further worsened, leading finally to official acceptance of a three-year inter-

regnum in planned development and shifting of the Fourth Plan period from 1966-71 to 1969-74. Simultaneously, trade with the socialist countries also began to stagnate, rupee devaluation linked with the import liberalisation scheme finance by Western non-project aid hitting it particularly hard. It is however of some interest to recall that, even in the early stages of the unfolding of these developments, suggestions were being made about the desirability of the Soviet Union also extending some part of its aid in non-project form. When development is halted and new development projects are at a discount non-project credits and supplies financed by them are obviously the most sought-after support for maintenance of the economy which, rather than development, was increasingly becoming the principal concern of the managers of the Indian economy. The Soviet Union too was expected by them to contribute a share to such support for the running of the Indian economy as distinct from its development in the face of growing strains and difficulties.

When the slow-down of the development process turned into definite industrial recession in the last two years, the situation for Indo-Soviet economic co-operation became even more difficult. The large industrial projects set up in the first phase of our economic planning, many of them with the assistance of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, where then just in the early stages of commissioning. What might have been a matter of national rejoicing at the start of of reaping of rewards from the huge investments made on these projects, drawn on the Indian side from the meagre incomes of our people in the form of harsh taxes, became a matter of deep anxiety in the prevailing situation. The projects ran into the prospect of under-utilisation on accounts of lack of orders, the steel and power development programmes having got stuck and the steel plants and the engineering sector generally hit by the recessionary trend.

This phenomenon appears to

have been treated at the beginning as a temporary aberration devoid of much long-run importance. It appears to have been taken for granted, at least so far as Indo-Soviet economic relations were concerned, that once economic development was resumed things would return to previous positions. However, as the process of resuming economic development and formulation of the new Fourth Plan is going through a painful and tortuous path, it is quite clear that the previous era has passed for ever and there will be no mechanical return to old pattern and form.

The essential feature of the old pattern was conditioned by the fact of the extreme backwardness of the Indian economy. The readiness of the Soviet Union to assist the setting up of large metallurgical complexes fitted into any worthwhile scheme of basic industrialisation and was gratefully taken advantage of. In retrospect, of course, it is clear that many of the projections and assumptions on which the capacities of these complexes were based were on the high side. But that is not the crucial aspect. What is crucial is that these complexes having come up, together with rest of the effort put in, we have developed a fairly sizeable and diversified industrial structure of our own, specially in the metallurgical sector, and any further development in this sector can be taken up by ourselves with no assistance or only marginal assistance from outside. There is little scope left for Soviet assistance in this sector in which its assistance has been most prolific and rewarding so far.

In the field of trade, the beginnings of rapid expansion was based on India supplying primary raw materials, mainly drawn from agriculture, in exchange for industrial goods from the Soviet Union. In what is called our traditional items of exports a hump has been reached, and it is now fairly clearly established that there is little scope for India to step up export of these items. We are becoming more and more keen to export the manufactures of our new industrial capacities, and it is still not clear how far the Soviet market can profitably absorb them on

a long-term basis—as distinct from Soviet orders that have been placed and might be placed in the future such as for mild steel from Bhilai, principally on non-commercial considerations, as a gesture of help to relieve us of temporary difficulties in the running particularly of some Soviet-aided projects. As regards imports from the Soviet Union, our interest has clearly shifted from industrial machinery to industrial raw materials, components and parts, it is still not clear how far these items can be spared by the Soviet Union from its rather stretched resources committed to many claimants. It is such constraints which have tended to make Indo-Soviet trade turnover stagnate in the last three years: so much so that India has already emerged with a favourable balance on trade account with the Soviet Union. It is not only trading surpluses in both economies which cause difficulties. Their exchange is closely related with the question of prices which has become a problem of some magnitude after devaluation of the rupee and the pressure of world prices on these exchanges.

If the imbalance on trade account is able to absorb even our repayment obligations on account of credits from the Soviet Union drawn in the past, the situation for the present pattern of bilateral, balanced trade between India and the Soviet Union is bound to become difficult. It appears that Soviet planners saw the emergence of this problem quite some time ago and tried to find a way out by further loading the Indian economy with orders for exports to the Soviet Union. The assumption must have been that such loading will automatically result in our finding suitable matching orders on the Soviet Union to maintain the trade balance. In practice this has not worked in the way anticipated and has probably aggravated to some extent the emerging imbalance. Negotiations on the new Five-Year Trade Pact are shortly to start in Moscow. It is to be hoped that the solution to problems both sides are confronted with will be found. Friendship can only provide the right kind of backdrop

(Continued on page 30)

Indian Planning : Outline of a Critique and An Alternative Approach

K. N. RAJ

This paper was contributed for discussion at the Seminar on "Alternative Fourth Plan Policies" at Trivandrum, October 9-12, 1968.

WHEN India set out on a path of planned economic development a little over 18 years ago it was in order to achieve certain specific objectives within defined periods of time. These objectives were in part set out in the First Five Year Plan but more fully in the Second. The most important of them were the following :

- (1) doubling of the real per capita income in the country by about 1970-71—in any case not later than 1977¹—to make possible a noticeable improvement in consumption standards ;
- (2) reduction in the share of agriculture in the total working force—from over 70 per cent in 1950-51 to 60 per cent by 1975-76²—to facilitate the achievement of fuller employment opportunities and higher productivity among the rural population ;
- (3) self-sufficiency in foodgrains and development of capital goods industries—to prevent shortage of foreign exchange acting as an absolute constraint on the development programme and to make the country less vulnerable to economic and political pressures from outside ;
- (4) reduction in the inequalities of income and wealth and in the concentration of economic power—to lessen the social and political tensions associated with growth and to create conditions favourable to the development of a truly democratic system ; and

- (5) total cessation of reliance on foreign aid by 1965-66³—to make further development of the economy truly self-sustaining.

It was also recognised from the outset that the achievement of these objectives required rapid technological transformation of the economy, both in agriculture and in industry, and that such transformation could be brought about only by a transformation of social institutions and relationships.

"Corresponding to each stage of development, there tends to grow a certain economic and social stratification which is conducive to the conservation of gains from the use of new techniques. Such stratification has a part to play in social progress. But, beyond a point, it hampers innovation and change, and its very strength becomes a source of weakness. For development to proceed further, a re-adaptation of social institutions and social relationships thus becomes necessary. In planning for a better economic order, the close inter-relationship between the technical and social aspects of the process has to be continually kept in view".⁴

The nature of the transformation required was spelt out clearly in the Second Five Year Plan :

"The task before an underdeveloped country is not merely to get better results within the existing framework of economic and social institutions, but to mould and refashion these so that they contribute effectively to the realization of wider and deeper social values. These values are basic objectives and have recently been summed up in the phrase 'socialistic pattern of society'. Essentially, this means that the basic criterion for determining the lines of advance must not be

1. "... we regard the rate of development indicated...as not only the minimum that the community will have to aim at over the next few quinquenniums but as something which must be exceeded. With planned conservation and utilisation of resources, it should be possible to double per capita incomes in 20 years or so. Doubling national income per capita in this period is by no means an over-ambitious target". Planning Commission, *First Five Year Plan*, Chapter 1, page 23.
2. "With the best effort that can be made, some increases in the working force in agriculture may be unavoidable for some years to come. By 1975-76, the proportion of the agricultural labour force to the total should come down to 60 per cent or so". Planning Commission, *Second Five Year Plan*, Page 14.

3. "... step-up in investment in the Second and Third Plan periods is relatively larger than what is required later. These 10 Years may, therefore, be regarded as the most crucial in determining the further course of development. It is that crossing of this 'threshold' at a time when living standards and the saving potential are low that calls for a measure of external assistance to supplement domestic resources." Planning Commission, *Second Five Year Plan*, p. 11.
4. *First Five Year Plan*, Chapter 1, page 7.

private profit but social gain, and that the pattern of development and the structure of socio-economic relations should be so planned that they result not only in appreciable increases in national income and employment but also in greater equality in incomes and wealth. Major decisions regarding production, distribution, consumption and investment—and in fact all socio-economic relationships—must be made by agencies informed by social purpose. The benefits of economic development must accrue more and more to the relatively privileged classes of society and there should be a progressive reduction of the concentration of incomes, wealth and economic powers'.⁵

II

SUBSEQUENT experience indicates the extent of the gap between these objectives and the actual achievement. Per capita income in 1967-68—a year of bumper harvests—was only about 25 per cent higher than two decades earlier. Between 1950-51 and 1960-61 there was hardly any reduction in the share of agriculture in the total working force, and there is not much evidence of a significant change since then. The scale of foodgrain imports has been growing and the country has been relying heavily on such imports even in years of record domestic production such as 1960-61 and 1967-68. Though considerable progress was made in developing capital goods industries between 1956-57 and 1963-64 a large part of the capacity built up at a great cost in this sector remains unutilized today retarding their further growth. Despite the recent cutbacks in the investment programme, which have reduced the rate of net investment in the economy to its lowest level perhaps in the last decade (just a little over 10 per cent of the national income in 1967-68, according to Planning Commission estimates), the country depends on foreign aid today to the extent of nearly 4 per cent of the national income annually. Inequalities in income and wealth are also greater now than they were at the beginning of this period of planned development; and, while the economy continues to be a mixed one, the ingredients of the mixture are making it conform more closely to a capitalist than a socialist pattern.

The reaction of policy makers in the government to this experience has been however not to re-examine the basic premises of their strategy but to accept some of the developments as inevitable—more particularly the accentuation of inequalities in income and wealth—and to seek remedies of an essentially technocratic nature to the other problems. Examples of the latter are the new approach to agriculture relying mainly on “modern” inputs and the bigger farmers, and the industrial and trade policies which are sought to be justified mainly in terms of the improvements they are expected to make to the efficiency of allocation of inputs. It is presumed that a rate of growth of 5 per cent per annum in foodgrain production and of 5 to 6 per cent per annum in national income are within immediate reach; that these rates of growth,

if achieved, will solve most of the problems confronting the economy today; and that the only major changes in strategy required now are an extension of the period of dependence on foreign aid by another decade or so, and concentration meanwhile on the ways and means of increasing production rapidly (rather than on questions of equity and social justice or on the related question of the agencies through which the increases in production are to be achieved).

Technocrats and solutions based on a technocratic approach are an essential requirement of planning, particularly when resources are scarce and every effort has to be made to harness modern science and technology for raising productivity. Many of the techniques that are sought to be adopted now in answer to particular problems are therefore not in themselves objectionable. But the question to consider is whether they provide a solution to the conflicts and contradictions that are developing within the economy as a result of the extreme hardships imposed on the lower strata of society, sharp regional disparities and imbalances, and excessive dependence on foreign aid (which is not only itself showing signs of drying up but is contributing to worsening the foreign exchange situation by rapidly increasing the annual debt service obligations of the country). While problems of this kind are difficult to avoid altogether they have clearly assumed proportions now that they have become sources of serious instability; unless therefore some steps are taken in the immediate future to minimize these conflicts and contradictions, the whole programme of development—however well-conceived it might be in other respects—seems certain to come to grief and indeed lead in all probability to a breakdown of the Indian experiment in political democracy and economic planning.

III

BASICALLY the problems now confronting the economy are traceable to an assumption explicitly introduced into planning in recent years—namely that no change can be made in the pattern of income—distribution, and that therefore any increase in income required at the lower income levels has to be matched by an equivalent percentage increase in income at the higher income levels. This was brought out clearly in a document of the Perspective Planning Division (of the Planning Commission) prepared in August 1962 on the “Implications of Planning for a Minimum Level of Planning”. It started from a norm laid down by a Working Group (which included the present Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission as one of its members) that, for ensuring a standard of living which could be in some sense be described as the minimum needed under Indian social conditions, every family of 5 members should have income to sustain (at the price level prevailing in 1960-61) an aggregate consumption expenditure of not less than Rs. 100 per month in the rural areas and Rs. 125 per month in the urban areas.⁶ This

5. *Second Five Year Plan*, Chapter 1, page 22.

6. This was exclusive of the necessary expenditure on health and education presumed also some subsidy in urban housing.

was accepted as an objective to be aimed at. An examination of the National Sample Survey data on consumption expenditure of households in the urban and rural areas showed however that one-half of the total population could not afford even this level of consumption in 1960-61. It was therefore considered appropriate that one of the objectives of planning should be to provide, within 15 years, to all but the bottom two deciles of the population an income adequate to sustain such a level of consumption. But even this required a rate of growth of over 7 per cent per annum in the income accruing to the decile immediately above the two lowest ones and, since shifts in income distribution were ruled out, a rate of growth of the same order in the entire national income is required.

There is of course much to be said for a poor country aiming at a high rate of growth, but what needs to be underlined here is that, on the assumption stated, the realization of even an admittedly low minimum level of consumption turned on the achievement of such a high rate of growth of the economy.

IV

WHAT are the implications of this approach for the investment programme to be framed? It is necessary here to mention only two of them. In the first place, if income and consumption is to grow rapidly all along the line—including at the highest income-levels⁷—high rates of investment have to be aimed at. A large part of the available resources will be inevitably absorbed by the direct and indirect requirements of the increases in consumption alone. Secondly, the provision of a minimum level of household consumption—however desirable and urgent—cannot be the only objective of planning. Apart from the need to allow for other collective consumption requirements such as that of defence, education and health, there are several additional objectives to be aimed at, such as to make the process of growth itself self-sustaining and the economy self-reliant. All this would call for supplementary investment in particular sectors and hence require additional resources. In other words, given the approach, there is no way out but to programme for extremely high rates of investment. On a conservative estimate it would appear that the rate of investment would have to touch a level of not less than 18-20 per cent of the national income (excluding replacement investment in agriculture.)

The question then is whether rates of domestic saving of this order can be realized. Experience suggests that they are difficult to achieve in the ordinary course, more particularly in a country in which high rates are not known to have been achieved in the past. Further, it is evident that in India today the propensity to consume is high not only among the lowest income groups but even at the higher levels, so that the highly skewed income distribution does not by itself ensure a high rate of saving. In fact, the political and administrative

power exercised by virtue of their economic position by the top 5 per cent of the population—and which include those belonging to the so-called “middle classes”—is widely used to prevent effective taxation of income and consumption at the levels at which they are more easily borne, to devise various scheme of subsidising those who are already well off, and thus in a variety of ways to frustrate all attempts to raise the rate of domestic saving. (Since pressures are also exerted by these groups to divert available investible resources for meeting their own requirements, in violation of the priorities indicated in the national plans, it is indeed questionable whether the upper income groups now make a net contribution in terms of resources to the development requirements of the rest of the population.)

Faced with this problem—which reflects itself in the form of a chronic shortage of resources, more particularly of foreign exchange—the tendency in Indian planning has been to (a) suppose optimistically that a rate of growth of national income of around 6 per cent per annum can be achieved by a rate of investment of no more than about 15 per cent of the national income; (b) postulate relatively high marginal rates of saving on the basis of proposals for some additional taxation by Central and State Governments within the present framework; and (c) rely in practice on foreign aid to an increasing degree for sustaining the investment undertaken both in the public and private sectors. The greater the shortfalls in production compared to the targets the lower has been the income from which to save (relatively to the assumptions about income underlying the plans); in addition, the lower the actual marginal rate of saving, all the greater has been the shortfall in the resources required for carrying out the investment programme; and the larger the cuts in investment programme forced by shortage of resources the greater naturally have been the handicaps in realizing the production targets. Thus, by the very logic of the strategy, failure to achieve some of the crucial targets laid down for the economy to move along a chosen “turnpike” has been leading not just to marginal adjustments in the planned path but to its being thrown off the turnpike altogether into a ditch.

The meaning is obvious: as long as the basic approach itself is not modified (removing thereby the constraints now imposed by it) setting of high growth targets in the Fourth Plan cannot be taken as indicative of “boldness” in planning—in fact it is the reverse of it. Far from leading to the attainment of the desired objectives, this approach is more likely to lead to continued shortfalls in production and saving compared to the targets,⁸ anarchic price rises induced by desperate efforts to maintain investment expenditure at the planned levels despite these short-

7. The PPD document assumed that the rate of growth of consumption in the top decile would be relatively very low, without indicating the measures which it pre-supposed.

8. The specific reasons why such shortfalls in foodgrain production are likely to develop, despite the new strategy based on the introduction of hybrids and intensive application of other inputs, are outlined in my paper on “Some Questions Concerning Growth, Transformation and Planning of Agriculture in Developing Countries, to be published shortly in the *Journal of Development Studies* (United Nations).

falls, and greater dependance on foreign aid to "save" the situation at each stage even though one of the declared objectives is said to be to reduce such dependence.

V

THE only way of making planning in India more meaningful and realistic is to recognize that :

- (a) there are serious constraints on achieving in the next decade a rate of growth of national income of more than 4-5 per cent per annum in the economy as a whole (even though higher rates can be more easily realized in certain regions immediately without any great planning effort, and comparable rates may be achieved in the country as a whole after some years when the required social and economic overheads have been built up in all regions) ;
- (b) that higher rates of growth can be achieved during this period only with much higher rates of investment than can be sustained with foreseeable increases in domestic saving and which would therefore require large doses of foreign aid ;
- (c) that it is neither desirable nor realistic to frame programmes which are dependent on foreign aid except very marginally, and that (more particularly in view of the recent experience regarding the quantum of aid available and the pressures aid-giving countries of all blocs apply on the recipients) the reduction in dependance on aid has to be immediate and not something to be brought about by the end of a decade from now ;
- (d) that the necessity to ensure a minimum standard of living to the lower income groups in our society can be reconciled with a moderate rate of growth of 4-5 per cent per annum in the national income provided measures are taken to bring about a certain degree of redistribution of income ;
- (e) that radical land reform designed to prevent any household from holding land more than 4-5 acres in size (except in very arid regions where adjustments will have to be made taking into account the quality of the land) will not only be a major step towards bringing about such a re-distribution of income and consumption but promote more extensive adoption of new technologies in agriculture with a labour-intensive bias (as in Japan and Formosa)⁹, increase employment opportunities for sections of the rural population which are now exposed to acute

under-employment, and possibly even increase the rate of investment and saving in the rural sector ;

- (f) that changes in the level, content, and rate of growth of consumption among the higher income groups brought about by land reform and supporting measures in the urban areas, even if apparently not adequate to make possible a significant increase in consumption at the lower levels, will release a substantial amount of resources (including foreign exchange) which are otherwise absorbed by investment in, and the production of, goods and services demanded by the more prosperous sections of the community today ;
- (g) that a large part of the saving required for investment must be secured from the profits of public enterprises, and that this calls not merely for extension of the public sector but for a number of supporting policies which will ensure that these enterprises function efficiently and yield profits, *not* be turned into devices for subsidizing privileged sections in the private sector or for its own employees to secure similar privileged positions relatively to others ; and
- (h) it is only through structural changes of this kind affecting both agriculture and industry, and by careful conservation of investible resources, that the foundations of a self-reliant economy can be built and regional and other disparities reduced over a period of time.

The ability to implement a programme of this kind rests however crucially on the political parties in command—not only on their ideology in a general sense but on the extent of support they are able to build up among the people for carrying through such a programme. No political party in India today satisfies the necessary conditions, and in this sense this is not a practical programme. But there is no alternative programme that can be regarded as much more practical—since all the other alternatives (including the Fourth Plan that is being framed now) depend crucially on a number of unrealistic assumptions and are unlikely to provide satisfactory solutions. While therefore the political processes involved in the final abandonment of the present approach could prove time-consuming and painful, and it may take some more time before the alternative approach outlined here becomes "practical", there cannot be much doubt about the direction in which planning and economic policy in this country has to move. The need now is to create wider awareness of this fact and prepare the ground in all possible ways for shortening the period of transition.

*Delhi School of Economics,
October 4, 1968.*

9. Land holdings in Japan and Formosa are now generally in the size-range of 2 to 5 acres. Even if such low ceilings cannot be imposed in India it is evident from the National Sample Survey data on the size-distribution of operational holdings that all rural households can be provided with holdings of not less than 4 acres in size in the relatively dry zones of "North-West" "Central" and "West" India if a ceiling of 20 acres is enforced, and of at least 2 acres

in size in "North", "West" and "South" India if a ceiling of 10 acres is enforced in these zones. Holdings below 4 acres in size in the former group and of 2 acres in the latter group account now for well over one-half of all rural household. (In fixing the ceilings and floors account will of course have to be taken of the considerable differences in the quality of land within each zone).

A Seminar on "Alternative Fourth Plan Policies" was called on the initiative of the Kerala Government at Trivandrum on October 9-12, 1968. The Seminar's conclusions captioned, "An Outline of Alternative Policies for the Fourth Five Year Plan," were published in Mainstream (November 16) along with an introductory article by Sri E.M.S. Namboodiripad. The following comment on the Seminar's conclusions is by two distinguished economists who were invitees to the Trivandrum Seminar.

A Comment On Trivandrum Seminar Conclusions

K. N. RAJ and AMIT BHADURI

This comment has been prepared for publication along with the other papers connected with the Seminar, as we are among the invitees and had contributed papers for discussion but could not participate in the deliberations in Trivandrum leading to the conclusions set out in the "Outline."

WE are in agreement with the view that important policy changes need to be made in Indian planning policies to overcome the problems now facing the country. We are also convinced that this requires settling a number of vital issues on the political plane, and that any alternative approach formulated must be politically meaningful. While economists and other technical experts have an obligation to focus attention on the problems now facing the country and indicate alternative ways of overcoming them we recognize that their feasibility and even the manner in which they are discussed and debated will be governed by various political considerations. We do not therefore propose to analyse the document on "Alternative Policies" in narrow technical terms, but view it rather as a preliminary exercise in the formulation of a programme that is not only technically feasible but has political relevance to those who believe in socialism as a more democratic form of social organization.

We have however misgivings about the internal consistency of the programme judged even in very broad terms and also the political assumptions underlying it. The document strikes us as a list of proposals for most of which a good case can be made out considered in isolation but which do not really add up to a feasible programme. If it were clear that the proposals are meant to give an idea of the kind of programme that might be implemented by a socialist State our disagreement would be confined strictly to questions of internal consistency viewed from a technical angle, but since they are presumably intended to be guiding lines for political and administrative action within the existing power-structure we are left in doubt as to what precisely are the implicit premises. We fear that if the

Planning Commission's "Approach to the Fourth Five Year Plan" is characterized by wishful thinking and inadequate attention to important issues facing the country—as we believe it is—the same could be said of the "Alternative Policies" even after allowing for legitimate differences in the political assumptions and approach.

The first step in framing an alternative economic programme, one would have thought, would be to postulate the character of the State that will implement it, i.e., the sources of its power (more particularly its class base), and the instruments available to it. It is evident that a programme of the kind outlined in the document cannot be implemented by the State as at present constituted. This by itself is not a matter for criticism, but we believe that it is important to have a clear idea of the changes in the character of the State that can be brought about in the foreseeable future, the instruments that could be expected to be available given the changes, and which of them it would be desirable to use for achieving the objectives.

It is our impression that the dominant feature of the present stage of political development in India is a struggle for power between the very big propertied interests (both rural and urban) in the country on the one hand and the more articulate small propertied classes (including the salaried) in the urban areas. It is also our impression that the main difference between most of the political parties today is in the extent to which they aligned with either or both of these groups and in the direction of their drift; and that, since the cases of total alignment with any one of the two groups (as in the case of the Swatantra Party) are relatively rare, political activity takes largely the form of competition

between different parties for gaining strength among the numerically larger of the two (that is, the small propertied interests and salaried classes) with varying degrees of support from the much smaller but otherwise more powerful group. The working class as such and the small peasantry are not yet very much in the picture except in certain limited areas of the country. Moreover, though trade unions have acquired some strength in urban areas by organizing relatively skilled labour employed in strategically important sectors like railways, post and telegraphs, factory enterprises, and government services, their leadership appears to have developed an outlook to economic problems that has much in common with that of petit-bourgeois movements.

The contradictions that have developed in Indian planning—in so far as they are attributable to political factors—can be traced to a large extent to the effort to achieve high rates of economic growth without alienating either of the two groups mentioned above. Unlike in countries like Japan at their corresponding stages of development (and in West Pakistan today) the large propertied interests have not been politically strong enough to enforce high rates of saving by unrestricted exploitation of the other section of the population. At the same time, the “petit-bourgeois” groups which formed the core of the nationalist movement and have essentially provided the political leadership in the last two decades have proved incapable of carrying through a feasible alternative programme—partly no doubt because of their dependence on the larger propertied interests but to a large extent on account of their fear of making any radical changes in regard to property rights which might affect them adversely and also their own preferences for programmes oriented to immediate improvements in their consumption standards. All this has affected not only the mobilization of resources but also the pattern of their utilization.

The strategy followed hitherto could make some headway as long as large amounts of foreign aid were becoming available and no difficult choice had to be made regarding either the mobilization of resources within the country or their use. Problems have arisen now because (a) the need for foreign aid has been growing given the policies on which the internal political balance is based and on which the available aid has been forthcoming; (b) the scale and conditions of such aid have been becoming less favourable on account of changes in the balance of forces in the world at large; and (c) politically difficult decisions regarding the mobilization and use of resources cannot any longer be postponed without giving up even the minimal objective of planning.

In this kind of situation it is necessary for those who believe in socialism to keep in mind not only the ultimate objectives but the instrument through which they are to be achieved. It is all too easy to advocate policies such as nationalization of industry, banking, commerce, etc. without paying adequate attention to the character of the State that will run the enterprises and the purpose such nationalization is to serve. It can also be very tempting to run with the hares while hunting with the hounds and support various pressure groups

within the existing power structure demanding lower taxes, larger subsidies, higher wages, etc. without carefully considering how the satisfaction of these demands will affect the other parts of the programme that is being advocated and whether it will help or hinder the achievement of the desired objectives.

In our view, the main danger in the years immediately ahead is that, paralysed by the struggle for political power between the two groups mentioned earlier, not only will the objectives of planning hitherto accepted to be abandoned altogether (some of the objectives have already been abandoned) but political forces deriving support from the large propertied interests within the country and important aid-givers abroad will seek to impose authoritarian regimes in the name of national discipline and high rates of economic growth. Such regimes, even while based on the use of bureaucratic power can be expected to try and win over strategically important sections of the small propertied and salaried classes and even of the organized working classes—partly by appealing to their nationalist sentiments and partly by minor economic concessions—and use the power so acquired to crush the movements that pose a threat to the existing social and economic order. The “Leftist” forces in the country are as yet much too weak and splintered to meet this kind of challenge, partly because the classes on which they can build their support are not fully formed and politically conscious in most regions of the country, and partly because these forces themselves are either too “petit-bourgeois” in their outlook or have not bothered to work out a strategy taking realistically into account their own strength.

If it is agreed that the important things now is to avert this danger—particularly since the viability of such authoritarian regimes in the less developed societies has been amply demonstrated both by their endurance in many countries and the political alliances that even countries committed to revolutionary ideals have forged with them in recent years—those who believe in socialism must come out with a programme that has not only political appeal to wide sections of the population but is sufficiently realistic to become a genuine alternative available in the next few years. The document on “Alternative Policies” meets perhaps the first requirement to a certain extent but fails in significant respects in regard to the second.

Consider, for instance, the proposal that the pricing policies of the public undertakings should be redesigned “with a view to help the final consumers rather than the monopoly and U-Sector industries”. Should the pricing policies of public enterprises be primarily consumer-oriented at all at this stage of development? One sees the case for a system of wage incentives linked to improvements in efficiency and the proposal for worker participation in the management of public enterprises. But is the demand for a “need-based wage” consistent with the domestic saving requirements of a programme of self-reliant economic development, particularly when an important condition of success of such a programme is that the public sector should have large enough surpluses for investment and when it is evident that

the first impact of the acceptance of this demand is likely to be on the surpluses of this sector? Those who believe in socialism have surely a greater stake than anyone else in demonstrating that public undertakings can promote greater efficiency among workers and generate adequate savings for growth. Moreover, if only those who earn wages are to be enabled to secure an immediate rise in their standards of living, not only will many other underprivileged sections of the population be left out but the benefits given to the former will to a larger extent be at the expense of the latter. There is probably something to be said for the proposal as a political tactic, but we feel that this is the kind of tactic which may well come in the way of the over-all strategy required for achieving the objectives.

Even the limited scope that there is now for inducing saving from among wage incomes—and which in fact would need to be enlarged if we are to be in a position to rely less on savings from the upper-income groups—is eliminated by the proposal that “social security schemes should be non-contributory for the workers”. When this is put forward along with another proposal that “a massive programme for housing for all the industrial workers” should be immediately implemented (so that “whenever a new factory is started the management must provide residential accommodation for all its employees”) one begins to wonder whether those who regard all this as part of an alternative approach have given any thought at all to the implications of their proposals. There is certainly evident a lack of recognition that, even if all the misuse of resources now generated by the present social and economic system could be stopped with immediate effect, there would be considerable pressure on available resources if the objective is to ensure, without depending on massive foreign aid, minimum levels of living (including provision of education and health services) to all sections of the population within a certain period and the attainment of a reasonably adequate rate of economic growth in the country. The problems in the way of achieving and sustaining high rates of growth no doubt make it necessary to pay much more attention to the scope for redistribution of consumption in favour of those who are below the subsistence level now, but that also makes it necessary to recognise the dangers of a programme which promises immediate improvement in consumption at higher levels.

In view of the detail in which some of the proposals have been spelt out one finds it surprising that what is visualized in an important matter like the size-distribution of land holdings—which vitally affects the bulk of the rural population—has not been made very clear. Cultivable waste lands are to be distributed to landless labourers, and there is a passing reference to the mechanism for fixing “the ceiling for a particular family’s total holding”, but nothing is said about either the criteria for fixing such ceilings or the need for setting a floor to the size of holdings. The concept of a floor could have been linked not only with the requirements of intensive cultivation (which some of the new technologies in agriculture make all the greater) but with the objective of provid-

ing fuller employment and a minimum level of living to more than one half of the rural population which have now either no land or only holdings of very small size.* Indeed this is one sector in which redistribution can be advocated not only on grounds of equity but for the fuller and more efficient use of resources.

We find ourselves in complete agreement with a large number of the proposals made—including those for normalization of relations with Pakistan and China, setting a ceiling on defence expenditure, and revision of the Constitution to remove the present legal obstacles in the way of reform of the existing property structure through democratic processes. Further, while we feel that the powers of the Centre should be increased in certain respects—particularly to enable it to enforce a truly national food policy—we agree that the States should generally have greater freedom to pursue economic policies suited to their particular conditions and requirements and that there should be less centralization in decision making as well as in administration. But our fear is that the rather indiscriminate way in which proposals of all kinds have been listed together, without apparently weighing their relative importance or carefully considering their economic and political implications, is likely to lead to the proposals that deserve serious and immediate attention being dismissed along with the others by informed opinion in the country.

We feel therefore that the proposals contained in the document need to be re-examined and revised in the light of the considerations we have set out. We would also like to suggest for further discussion the following political premises as a basis for framing an alternative approach:

1. Both the compulsions of declining foreign aid and the wide resentment on nationalist grounds of the interference by aid-givers with internal economic policies provide an environment in which policies based on greater self-reliance will command wide support in the country.
2. Since there are serious constraints on the feasible rates of economic growth imposed by the rate of domestic savings, shortage of foreign exchange, inadequacy of the past investment in social and economic overheads in many regions of the country, etc.—and there are limits to the changes that can be brought about in this regard in the next few years—it is important to be aware of the need to make difficult choices in both the mobilization and use of resources. While the evasion of these questions may be politically helpful in the short run it will in the longer run discredit those who resort to it (as recent experience has already done to the party in power).
3. Political movements aiming at radical social and economic changes in India need to direct

*Cf. K. N. Raj, “Indian Planning: Outline of a Critique and an Alternative Approach” (paper submitted earlier for discussion at the Seminar, published in this issue of MAINSTREAM).

their attention primarily to the rural sector and not get excessively committed to the demands and aspirations of "petit-bourgeois" sentiment in the urban sector (indeed, it is where this policy has been followed that these movements are strongest now).

4. Different regions in India are in very different stages of social, economic and political development, which implies not only that the approach adopted has to take account of these differences but that the preparatory period required for introducing radical policies may be much longer in some than in others.
5. In the intervening period any programme that is put forward as an alternative to present policies must not only take account of these regional differences but rest primarily on the nationalist sentiment for developing the economy at as rapid a rate as possible and for avoiding dependence on other countries; while the extent of "socialist transformation" possible during this period would be indeed limited it would make possible the isolation of those who are seeking transformation in the opposite direction

and to prepare the ground for more radical changes later.

6. In preparing such a programme it is important to take full account of the experience gained by socialist countries like Poland, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia in recent years—more particularly in regard to the role of small holdings in agriculture, methods of management of public undertakings, the limitations of "procurement" as a means of securing foodgrain supplies from agricultural producers, and the use of dual markets (one controlled and the other largely uncontrolled) for the distribution of scarce resources—as well as of other countries like Japan which have been able to generate high rates of saving and economic growth in household enterprises both in agriculture and industry.

It seems to us that if there is agreement on these political assumptions it would be possible to work out an alternative set of policies that would be of relevance in the next few years, command wide support, and prepare the ground for more radical social and economic changes in the future.

Delhi School of Economics

Some Perspectives on Gandhi

K. P. KARUNAKARAN

THE literature on Gandhi is already very large. Still one feels that as far as the studies on Gandhi's ideas and work are concerned there are some virgin fields. Some detailed and definitive studies can usefully be undertaken after the century year when many more documents on Gandhi and the Gandhian era will be made available to the general public in a systematic manner.

But it was not always the lack of information that was responsible for the dearth of scientific studies in this field. One main reason was the extremely controversial nature of Gandhi's life and the passions he

aroused in different sections of the people. It was not an accident that only recently a statue of Gandhi was unveiled in London and only recently some excellent studies on Gandhi were published in the West. It was also not surprising that Gandhi was not given the Nobel Prize for Peace or that he was not given an interview by the Pope in the nineteen thirties. During those days the establishments in the West had so much to lose by recognizing Gandhi as a very great man. This was equally true of the Communist establishment in the Soviet Union also. During recent years the description of Gandhi and his work in Soviet encyclopedia was revised very often and perhaps the latest is more realistic than the earlier references.

In India on the other hand there was such a glorified cult of Gandhi that it was almost impossible to

Dr. Karunakaran's contribution was presented at the Seminar on Gandhi: Theory and Practice, held under the auspices of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla in October 1968.

organise objective studies on Gandhi. The recent books and a large number of scholarly articles which are pouring in from the west now suggest that the dominating elements in the Western academic circles have disentangled themselves from the earlier sterile and conformist attitudes they have accepted on Gandhi.

In India, a healthy departure in this field is taking place only slowly. Apart from the fact that the cult of Gandhi is still very strong in the country, the gap which exists between the so called social scientists and social and political realities in this country is another factor which has hindered objective and scientific studies on Gandhi. The "Gandhians" have not made the tasks of the social scientists easier. Commenting on this matter Jaya Prakash Narayan observes: "... Those among the social scientists who have had some interest in Gandhi's message and its continuing relevance had no encouragement or opportunity to attempt the task of interpretation... Whether they were in the universities, research institutions or elsewhere, they had their programme of work cut out for them by the prevailing interests and climate of thought. These institutions, it need hardly be pointed out, have not been particularly concerned with Gandhi. Few among them (trained social scientists) are interested in Gandhi, or for that matter have the necessary social awareness... Terribly few, even among the competent ones, have the intellectual courage and adventure to blaze out a new path. The difficulty however, has not all been on the side of the intellectuals. On the part of us, Gandhians, there has been not little difficulty. On the one hand, there has been inadequate appreciation of the need and value of modern social science and its methodology for attaining the ends of the Gandhian movement; and on the other, we have had our own brand of intellectual and moral arrogance which not seldom borders on obscurantism and intolerant dogmatism. Our attitude to the intellectual has also been governed by such extraneous factors as scale of salaries, mill-made clothing, cigarettes and such like ... Little is it realised that the trained social scientist is expected to bring with him not Gandhian learning and attitude of mind but a scientific mind, a fund of valuable knowledge, the skills of his profession (of analysis, measurement, interpretation, presentation) and certain vocabulary used and understood by the modern elite all over the world."

Complex Personality

To begin with we must note that like all creative leaders Gandhi was an extremely complex personality. Among the political leaders of the twentieth century only Mao Tse-tung and Lenin can be compared to Gandhi in the range of their influence over their people. The followers of these two leaders can very well maintain that their political achievements were much greater than the achievement of Gandhi. But unlike them he had made valuable contributions in many other fields. That is why Gandhi is often referred to as a prophet and saint. At the beginning of Gandhi's career, Leo Tolstoy of Russia noted that Gandhi was an exceptional leader with a

universal message. Within a decade after Gandhi's death, Martin Luther King of the United States was proclaiming the indebtedness of American Negroes to Gandhi in their struggle for racial equality. More than one Christian missionary, who came to India to preach and to convert stated that they found a living Christ in Gandhi. Many thinkers of European continent like Romand Rolland and Rene Fillop Miller predicted in the nineteen twenties that Gandhi was a prophet of this generation—a view which was repeated by the historian Arnold Toynbee after Gandhi's death.

Inside the Indian sub-continent Gandhi was a controversial figure. Many Indians leaders who were held in high esteem by a section of the people before 1920 expressed the fear that Gandhi's emergence as the supreme leader would inaugurate a period of anarchy in this country. On the other hand he was accused of being a reactionary and the champion of vested interests by some communists inside the country and outside in the nineteen-thirties. M. A. Jinnah, the leader of the Indian Muslim League and the first Governor-General of Pakistan, felt that Gandhi was great leader of the Hindu community—a view he expressed even while paying a compliment to Gandhi after his death. To the militant Hindus he was the friend of the Muslims and Pakistan and that was why one of them murdered him. To many champions of "modernisation" Gandhi was an obscurantist and to the traditionalists Gandhi was a revolutionary who under-mined their positions.

It is not possible to touch upon all these aspects in one paper. Even if that is done, many other aspects of Gandhi and his views which related to nature cure, village industries and the role of religion in society will be left out. Here an attempt is made only to draw the attention of the participants of the seminar to some of the new perspectives on Gandhi opened up by some of the recent studies and to suggest some other lines on which studies can profitably be undertaken.

Although Gandhi often spoke of man's supreme need for a faith in God and religion, there were strong rationalist and materialist elements in Gandhi's thought and practice and these are often overlooked by students and commentators. These are not necessarily mutually contradictory although this is often wrongly assumed to be so. Gandhi's definition of God was unique, very often he said that God was truth; sometimes he said that truth was God. He had little use for hereditary priests and the established institutions like the temples from which the untouchables were excluded. He did not show high regard for the Pandits i.e. to those who had a scholastic attitude or to those devotees of God who left the rosary only for eating, drinking and the like". His following statements were revolutionary in the context they are made:

"To a people famishing and idle and only acceptable form in which God can dare appear is work and promise of food as wages". "... to serve India is to serve its poor. God we cannot see with our eyes;

it would do if we serve those we can see. The object of our public life is to serve the visible God, that is the poor”.

Many other utterances of Gandhi taking a similar view can easily be quoted. But much more than his sayings, the record of his work was the standing testimony to his being that “Life for me was real”. Until his death he was engaged in continuous wordly activities. Even his prayer meetings were generally used to propogate his views on social, economic and political issues.

He never accepted the outhority of any religious text or any particular interpretation of any text. He never wanted to leave a sect or dogma after him. Reason and the spirit of enquiry were cardinal features of his thought. His life itself was a series of experiments.

But at the same time he made concessions to heredity and the tradition of the people in some respects. In many studies on such subjects as the Social Background of European reformation, Martin Luther, the religious renaissance and German humanism, the origins of European capitalism and protestant Ethics, many scholars had examined the interrelation between religious reformation and social and political awakening and economic growth. Some of them had to draw a line between the area on which reason held supreme in the thought of Luther, Bernard and Thomas Aquinas and the area given to faith by them. No such comprehensive study is made in regard to Gandhi although a few maxims are stated by some scholars here and there.

Some of these maxims are sound. But they must be substantiated and much work should be done to stress the elements of reason and world and life—affirmation in Gandhi’s thought and practice.

Rebel and Revolutionary

Gandhi was a great rebel and revolutionary. Some extremely competent studies have focussed attention on this aspect. Two recent books are : *Gandhi : A Study in Revolution* by Geoffrey Ashe and *The Revolutionary Personality : Lenin, Trotsky Gandhi* by E. Victor Wolfenstein. Even before 1930 Rene Fulop Miller has focussed attention on this aspect of Gandhi’s personality in the book, written originally in the German, under the title *Lenin and Gandhi*.

In regard to the statement of objectives Gandhi was uncompromising. This was true both in regard to political and social questions. One of the recent books entitled on “Non-Violence and Aggression” (by H. J. N. Horsburgh) published in the United Kingdom gives emphasis to those aspects of Gandhian philosophy which refer to resistance to aggression. Quite a few scholarly articles also have dealt with Gandhi as a fighter. An Article which appeared in the *World Politics* in October 1963 was entitled, *The New Courage : An Essay on Gandhi’s Psychology*.

There was something thorough in Gandhi’s capture of the organisations which he wanted to lead. And there was something ruthless in Gandhi’s replies to his critics and in his occasioned dealings with political opponents. Though non-violent in form and

incapable of doing any bodily harm to any one, Gandhi never flinched from the consequences of any step he took in furtherance of his political and social aims.

On fundamentals he rarely compromised. His last act of martyrdom was in line with his basic approach. The Hindu metaphysical thought always accepted that there was truth in all religions and advocated religions tolerance. But day-to-day social behaviour of the vast number of Hindus was far from being based on any belief in tolerance. Gandhi’s final and uncompromising right was against this. But there were many other social and political questions on which he was equally uncompromising. His opposition to the practice of untouchability was another instance.

Like that of other great revolutionaries Gandhi’s thought could never be divorced from his practice. To him to believe in anything was to act on the basis of that belief and he always aroused enthusiasm among a large number of followers who accepted his lead.

This aspect of Gandhi is not entirely missed and in the recent period continuous attention is paid to it in scholarly writings although it has not fully cleared away the misunderstanding and confusion created by the linking up of Gandhi’s non-violence with his so called gentleness and his so called womanliness—a linking up which was extensively undertaken by those who never comprehended Gandhi.

Here again it is not Gandhi’s utterances to the effect that if there was a choice between cowardice and violence he would choose violence and that non-violence was not the weapon of the weak but of the strong that should pave the way, but a critical examination of his life and work and of those who had followed him. Many people hold the misconception that bravery and violence cannot be separated. Gandhi’s life was a standing repudiation of this view. Much work can still be done on this aspect of his life.

Another aspect of Gandhi and his work on which sufficient attention is not so far given by scholars was his realism and political sense. Even during his life Richard Gregg had written a book “The Power of Non-Violence” where he had referred to non-violent method as “moral-jiu...jitsu”. In that book and in other writings the author had maintained that the practical aspects and effectiveness of non-violent resistance could not be over-estimated. Gregg brought the testimony of physiologists, and psychologists, and philosophers to point out the “Inevitable” success of Gandhi and his methods.

Simone Panther Bricks book *Gandhi Against Machiavellism*, originally written in the French and translated into English in 1966, fulfils a similar function. This extremely competent study is guided by the following political formula : “Effectiveness is the function of organized force and action supported by numbers. And indeed if effectiveness is renounced, political action is renounced. If force or action is renounced. Satyagraha is renounced. If organisation or numbers are renounced, it losses its

vigour. Failure is due to the deficiency of one of the terms of the formula instead of its keeping pace with the progress of the others ; success to the full and harmonious development of all the terms" The author has critically examined some of the satyagraha campaigns and their fate in the light of this formula. Although the author has a personal faith in non-violence, the book is an objective study of Gandhi as a politician—a new kind of a Machiavelli.

Considerable work has still to be done in this field. The attention Gandhi gave to public relations, propaganda, the preparations he made before the beginning of each political campaign, his decision to suspend some campaigns, his tactical withdrawals, the negotiations he conducted and the pacts he concluded with his political opponents and other matters of this kind have to be scrutinously examined. The distinction he made between non-violence as a policy and as a creed and the use he made of this distinction are also to be studied. Gandhi also made a distinction between a temporary truce and a permanent peace. The Gandhi-Irwin pact was a temporary truce which he wanted to make use of for the preparation of the final struggle for freedom.

There should be thorough and critical studies on the strategy and tactics of non-violent resistance. "The Strategy of Civilian Defence—Non-Violent Resistance to Aggression" edited by Adam Roberts published in London in 1967 is a significant book in this field. Gene Sharp, who is a keen student on Gandhi, has contributed a paper to this book on "The Technique of Non-Violent Action."

Prophet with Universal Message.

Gandhi as a prophet is by no means a virgin field for students although many books written by his admirers on this subject are on a sentimental level. Some general books like "The Strategy of Civilian Defence" mentioned earlier and "The Pacifist Conscience" edited by Peter Mayer throws much light on Gandhi's role although they mention him and his writings only in some of the chapters. In this connection Aldous Huxley's short reference to Gandhi in his book "Ends and Means" is also noteworthy. By linking Gandhi to other classic writers and thinkers on the subject they help the understanding of Gandhi from global and historical angles. John V. Bondurant's study on "Conquest of Violence", Gene Sharp's "Gandhi wields the weapon of Moral Power" and H.J.N. Horsburgh's book "Non-Violence and Aggression" are specifically on Gandhi. They are also competent studies. Two significant books of Indian authors are : *The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi* by Gopinath Dhawan and *Studies In Gandhism* by Nirmal Kumar Bose. Both have approached their subject from a scholarly angle. Two other significant books are : *Gandhi's Challenge to Christianity* by S.K. George and *War Without Violence* by Krishanlal J. Sridharani. The first, written by an Indian christian, shows his search for a "great conception of God and life in which the spiritual leadership of Gandhi can be justly and comprehensively set by those who profess and call themselves Christians". Sridharani's book note the difference between

Western pacifism and Satyagraha as enunciated by Gandhi and explains the latter in scientific terms.

There are innumerable other books on this theme, but not written on a scientific level. Some of them are : (1) *My Gandhi* by John Haynes Holmes ; (2) (1954) *Gandhi The Holy Man* by Rene Fulop Miller (Translated from German to English in 1931) (3) *Mahatma Gandhi An interpretation* by E. Stanley Jones (1948), (4) *Mahatma Gandhi* by Rolland (Translated into English in 1924) ; (5) *To live in Mankind—A Quest for Gandhi* by Reginald Reynolds (1951) and (6) *Lead, Kindly Light* by Vincent Shean (1949). Many Contributors to the following book had developed on this theme : *Mahatma Gandhi, essays and reflections on his life and work* edited by S. Radhakrishnan (Second Edition 1949). This list can easily be lengthened.

Two recent biographies of Gandhi written by Louis Fischer and B.R. Nanda are important because they give a connected account of various phases of Gandhi's life. Nirmal Kumar Bose's book, *My Days with Gandhi*, Pyarelal's books on the early and later phase of Gandhi and Tendulkar's biographical volumes are other valuable sources of information. The collected works of Gandhi, now being published by Government of India, are other important additions in this field.

Although the number of books written in this field is very large there is good scope for further studies. It is important to note that Gandhi himself saw no contradiction between his role as an Indian political leader and his role as a teacher of mankind. (Of course, he did not use such expression as the teacher of mankind to describe himself). On the other hand he thought that one role supplemented the other. While replying to a friendly critic who maintained that Gandhi's grouping unities conflicted with "the large mission of uniting the world", he said that he was more cosmopolitan than his critic. He added : "unless I group unities I shall never be able to unite the whole world". In the same statement he said earlier : "What was the larger 'symbois' that Buddha and Christ preached ? Buddha fearlessly carried the war into the enemy's camp and brought down on its knees an arrogant priesthood. Christ drove out the money-changers from the temple of Jerusalem and drew from curses from heaven upon the hypocrites and pharisees. Both were for intensely direct action". While declining to accept the invitation of many Americans to visit their country and spread his message there, Gandhi said : "If I go to America or Europe, I must go in my strength, not in my weakness, which I feel today—the weakness, I mean of my country. For, the whole scheme for the liberation of India is based upon the development of internal strength. It is a plan for self-purification. ...And if the movement that I seek to represent has vitality in it and has divine blessing upon it, it will permeate the whole world without my physical presence in its different parts."

The impact Gandhi made on American Negroes and particularly their leader Martin Luther King, is the evidence of what Gandhi said on that occasion.

Now one also hears about Gandhi's influence on some of those who led the "non-violent non-cooperation movement" in Czechoslovakia recently against the foreign armies who occupied that country.

Although Gandhi did not visit foreign countries to spread his message, he expressed his views on various international questions and some important internal questions of other countries. They include the struggles of the Negroes and the Jews for the ending of discrimination against them, the problems of the Arab refugees, the struggles for freedom of Czechoslovakia, Poland and China. He also wrote open letters to Hitler, to "every Briton" and to "every Japanese" during the war giving his views on the armed conflicts and their resolution. An analytical study of these is still called for although the book "Gandhi on World Affairs" by Paul F. Power has referred to them in some detail.

Enriching and Deviating

Gandhi's ideas and his methods of social and political action are enriched by many others who have followed him. The most striking case is that of Martin Luther King, the American Negro leader. In his paper on "The technique of Non-Violent Action" included in the book on "The strategy Civilian Defence" Gene Sharp refers to important non-violent struggles which emerged, independently of Gandhi, under exceedingly difficult circumstances in Nazi-occupied and Communist countries. On the whole he refers to 84 cases on non-violent actions and makes comparisons and contrasts. This is attempted in a very short paper. A more detailed study will throw much light on many dark corners of this field and expose the weakness of the arguments of those who contend that non-violent campaigns can be undertaken only by a people like Indians with their unique traditions and only against a government like that of the British with their inherent liberal and democratic orientation.

Vinoba Bhawe is to some extent a projection of Gandhi in today's India. There is no systematic study of Vinoba Bhawe and no critical examination of the success and failures of his campaigns. A fairly good book on Bhawe is the one written by Lanza Sel Vasto, an Italian known in India as Shantidas, entitled "Gandhi to Vinoba" originally written in French and published in English in 1956.

The success of the studies with these new perspectives will depend very much upon the objective and intellectual levels on which they are undertaken. It also presupposes the willingness on the part of those who undertake such studies to be critical of Gandhi when the occasion demands it. He should be treated as a human being with faults as well as greatness. He has made Himalayan blunders and some of those he had not admitted because he was not aware of them. His attacks on modern civilization, machines and medicines cannot be fully defended now even if they can be explained as useful slogans in the period when they were made. His support to the Khilafat is another one of his acts which cannot be depened. There are many non-

essential elements in Gandhi's thought and practice which had become fads now. To take an instance, many of Gandhi's followers had virtually given up prohibition as a state policy and gone ahead with industrialization of the country on a large scale. But as fads they remain in their utterances. In India there is no "de-Gandhianization" in the realms of thought. The Indian Government's policies in regard to birth control and popularisation of modern medicines are other striking examples where it has taken place in the realm of action, here again the deviation from Gandhi is called for in the realm of thought as well as in practice. Gandhi's view on trusteeship and on structural reforms in regard to economic institutions should also be critically examined. Gandhi was fully justified in giving priority to employment before the introduction of machines in many fields economic activity. A new book at the problem is called for under the changed circumstances of today.

There are some fields where the present leaders of India has taken the clock back from Gandhi in practice but not in theory. A most striking case is the slogan of "Self-reliance" as far as economic plans are concerned. Decentralization of political power is another. A third relates to the narrowing of the gulf between the rulers and the ruled and the fourth the reorganisation of educational system for that and other purposes.

These are some of the questions which come to the mind of a student who are working on "Some Perspective on Gandhi." The purpose of this paper was only to raise some of these questions and not to answer them. It is hoped that some of them will be answered during the course of the seminar.

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Salazar and Neo-Colonialist Umbrella

KIRAN MISHRA

THE revolutionary fervour generated in the Asian and African continents, brought independence to many states after the Second World War. The chain of colonial rule broke down in quick succession during the 1950's. By 1964 there were 34 independent states in Africa; an Organization of African Unity was established in Addis Ababa to channelize the forces for the liberation of the African states which were still under the colonial yoke.

However, even after the break-up of the empires of the big colonial powers, like that of Great Britain and France (Germany's colonial possessions were broken up after the First World War) smaller colonial powers like Portugal and Spain still continued to possess colonies abroad. Although in the general rivalry of the imperialist powers, Portugal had receded in the background by the middle of 18th century, the history of Goa in India illustrates how an unimportant colonial power like Portugal could continue to keep in subjugation a certain territory abroad even after such great colonial powers like Great Britain had to give up their imperialist possessions. This could be possible however only under the umbrella provided by the greater powers which while ostensibly abiding by the United Nations Human Rights Charter, are nevertheless ready to accommodate its open flouting by the smaller imperialist powers like Portugal. The reason for such behaviour of the neo-colonialist powers is deep rooted, as we shall see, in their economic interests. These interests are well protected by the time-honoured post-war policy of

public aid and private investment for exploiting the resources of the colonies as well as many underdeveloped States.

To substantiate these general observations, we only give here a brief description of the US aid-investment policy towards Portugal and her African colonies.

In spite of the crimes against humanity committed by the Portuguese imperialists on the 12-million African people, the United States has been readily providing loans to the Portuguese Government. In December 1963 *Diário de Governo* reported a new loan of 35,000,000 dollars. The United State Gulf Corporation has concessions to extract petroleum in Mozambique. The Standard Oil Company of New Jersey has a forty-year concession in 'Portuguese' Guinea. The industrial and financial companies which control gold and diamond mining industries, are dominated by British and US investors receive handsome dividends for their investments in the colonies. The American investment is steadily growing. In 1963-64, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) gave a loan of 12,500,000 for the development work. In January 1965, Portugal received an aid of 20,000,00 dollars. We thus see that when the interests of powerful countries are involved these countries on the one hand profess belief in democratic institutions and on the other, behave as what may be called "Democratic imperialists."

The imperialist powers long ago went to the Coast of Africa on the mission of trade and discovery. But later, they set in to conquer the continent as part of the imperialist game. The imperialist powers in the beginn-

ing had great difficulty in subjugating African peoples, and anti-colonial resistance knocked them down again and again. But once the conquest was over the imperialists saw to it that the natives would not stir. The methods practised to subdue the natives was unspeakably brutal.

The Portuguese authorities like the Rhodesian minority regime are on the look-out for some hint of subversion. They constantly deal with their victims either by banishment to remote areas or by sentence of death. The report published this year by the Commission on Human Rights says, "Procedures and methods used by the special branch of the police for interrogation of detainees and the arrested persons are very similar to, if not identical, with those reported to have been used by the Gestapo under Hitler's Nazi regime of Germany."

Although in its Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nation Charter says that "all human beings are born free and are equal in dignity and rights...", it is certainly not so in the Portuguese colonies. According to the Portuguese Law of 1954 indigenous natives are people governed by their 'own customs' and not sufficiently civilized to come under Portuguese law. The professed aim of Portuguese policy is to raise all natives to a standard so that they can be integrated with the Portuguese. The Portuguese Government follows the Nazi policy of discrimination by colour and race and the accident of birth. According to the official Portuguese estimate this transformation process leading to final integration will take centuries.

The imperialists have always claimed that they brought Chris-

tian civilization to the savage races. The Portuguese Government claims Angola and Mozambique "as lands with four centuries old tradition of multi-racial tolerance that holds out the only hope for peace and civilization in the African continent." To maintain this so-called Christian civilization Salazar's Government has been using the same apparatus which was built up 25 years ago by the other Christian, Adolf Hitler. The Fascist Government of Salazar has managed to put under strict regulation the political, social and economic life of the African natives. For this purpose they have developed a Gestapo-like police network.

In this respect also the neo-colonialists have their share. Money must be followed by arms of repression. Under the cover of "helping the underdeveloped nations" the greatest exponent of "democratic imperialists", the United States of America has supplied to Antonio de Oliveira Salazar between 1951-1961 half a million dollars in the form of weapons. It is these weapons that Salazar is using against the revolutionary African fighters. In Mozambique alone Salazar has an army of 50,000 strong fully equipped counter-insurgency troops. The Salazar Government is preparing to meet the threats of the revolutionaries at any cost. Till last year the Portuguese Government was spending seven and a half million pound sterling every year for military purposes. This year the budget allots 50 million pound sterling for military purpose. To justify their conduct the Portuguese Government has been able to propagate the myth that these African countries are the 'overseas provinces' of a unitary state; it is, therefore, their duty to maintain peace and order in these 'provinces'.

Mozambique with a population of 7,000,000 is an agricultural country. It has come to occupy an important position in the Portuguese economy. Sixty-five per cent of its exports are raw cotton, raw sugar and cashew nuts. Angola with 4,800,000 inhabitants is famous for her diamond mining. Three commodities—coffee, sisal and dia-

monds—account for 62 per cent of Angola's exports. These two countries have come to occupy an important position in the Portuguese economy. On the one hand, they are enjoying the fruits of the export products of these colonies. On the other it exploits heavily from exports to the African overseas colonies. It is because of such advantages that Salazar could proclaim, "I do not see that we can rest in our labours nor can we have any other care than to hold with one hand our plough and with the other our sword" (Portuguese National Assembly, November 30, 1960).

In her book, *The New Africa* Professor Lucy Mair says, "The apparent quiet which lasted in Portuguese territories after nationalism had burst out everywhere else in Africa seemed to the Portuguese and some outside that the Africans were content with the policy of Salazar, which in a sense was non-discrimination, in the same sense one might say, White Rhodesians maintain that they judge the people by merit not race."

The first revolutionary outburst came from Angola in March 1961. Soon after the struggle started in Mozambique in September 1964. Portuguese Guinea is in fact even more advanced in the struggle with more than two-thirds of the country's territory already in the possession of the patriotic forces. The Africans have come to realize that the distinction, so to say, between progressive and conservative imperialists is fallacious. None of these can be relied upon for help. It is African power and

African unity alone which will eventually bring freedom and of Africa.

independence in the continent

The Organization of African Unity and the African Liberation Committee have unanimously decided to give priority to the liquidation of Portuguese control over the African territories. On July 20, 1964 President Julius Nyerere addressing the OAU Conference in Cairo declared: "My plea here therefore is for action to free the Portuguese colonies. Africa is strong enough to drive the Portuguese from our continent." Today we find Africa on the whole determined to throw the oppressors out. The main function of the OAU is not only to fight for liberation but also to see to it that there is a continuous flow of material and moral support for the fighters of Mozambique, South-Africa, Angola and Portuguese Guinea. On the one hand the revolutionaries of Angola, Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea are fighting the imperialists with the help of Afro-Asian bloc; on the other hand at the UN the Afro-Asian countries are demanding an explanation from the USA, UK and other neo-colonialist powers as to why their private capitalist companies are investing fortunes in these undemocratic regimes while their governments continue to pay lip service to the Human Rights Charter.

The only way left for the African freedom fighters under the circumstances is to take up arms and use guerrilla tactics of hit-and-run and tire out the enemy to eventual defeat.

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Hunger in India

KIRPA SHANKAR

WHEN in the year 1964-65 food-grains production reached 89 million tonnes, great satisfaction was expressed all round and official sources began to talk of making India self-sufficient in food supply in a year or two. But when in the following two years, production fell down to 72 and 75 tonnes respectively, all hopes of reaching self-sufficiency in a short period were belied and the protagonists had to beat a hasty retreat.

In the year 1967-68 the production of foodgrains reached an all-time record of 96 million tonnes thanks to favourable weather conditions. Official circles have once again begun talking glibly about reaching self-sufficiency in two or three years ignoring the fact that even in the bumper year India imported foodgrains to the tune of 7 million tonnes and that half of the population of the country does not get enough to eat.

Official circles want the people to believe that there is nothing wrong with the agricultural set-up and given a little effort, the food needs of all the citizens could be fully met.

But if we examine the extent of under-feeding and hunger in India, we find an alarming situation.

Adult's Diet

According to nutritional experts an average adult should get 2,600 calories from his diet. The diet in order to be a balanced one, should also contain good quality of proteins and vitamins. For hard manual labour the recommended calorie is 3,000 per day. The average Indian diet is

predominantly cereal-based and about 90 to 95 per cent of the calories are derived from cereals. One hundred gramms of cereal contains roughly 350 calories. Thus if an adult is to subsist wholly on cereals and pulses he should consume about 700 grams of foodgrains per day. But as the average diet contains something of non-cereal origin, can be said that at least 600 grams of foodgrains is the minimum per head per day which should be provided in the dietic standards prevailing in our country. As against, the per-capita availability has only been 400 grams during the last two years.

On the basis of 600 grams of foodgrains per adult per day the food needs of the country including the needs of seed, cattle feed and losses in storage will be about 113 million tonnes against the production of 96 million tonnes. The requirement of seed, cattle feed and loss in storage has been calculated at 15 per cent of the human consumption. As the population consists of children and old people whose consumption needs are less than that of an adult, the adult population has been taken at 85 per cent of the total population. On the basis of total requirement of 113 million tonnes of foodgrain, the annual deficit comes to about 19 million tonnes, about half of which is met by imports and the rest is the index of hunger and under-feeding in our country.

The National Sample Survey data throw some light on the extent of hunger in the various income groups in the country. According to the Sample data, the per-capita per month expenditure on food articles for

all the classes in the rural areas is Rs. 14 and for the urban areas it is Rs. 17. The poorest 16 per cent of the rural population spends only Rs. 5 per month on per-capita basis on food items. Another 20 per cent spends only Rs. 8 on food. More than one-third of the rural population and one-fifth of the urban population spends less than 30 paise on food per day. This section cannot afford full meal and hunger is widespread among the poorest of this class. Those spending less than Rs. 5 on food items forming 16 per cent of the rural population and 4 per cent of the urban population must be considered as being on the starvation level. Dr. Chandrashkhar has estimated that six crores of Indians retire to bed extremely hungry. The number may in fact be more than this.

Purchasing Power Vital

In the face of this widespread hunger, any talk of self-sufficiency becomes meaningless unless we can provide food for the poorest sections. An increase in food production is welcome but unless the purchasing power of the poorer sections is raised, mere rise in production will not be enough to banish hunger.

Uptil now, emphasis has been rightly given on increasing the production of foodgrains. But if we aim at providing full meal to everyone this is not all. The income level of the majority of the population will have to be increased by undertaking radical redistribution of wealth and among them primarily land.

The population of the country is increasing at the rate of 2.5 per

cent per annum and is likely to double itself by the close of the century. The rate of our agricultural growth has been hardly above the population growth rate. The growth rate has slowed down during the last few years as little new area is now left for bringing it under the plough. The only hope lies in intensive farming.

But intensive farming cannot be undertaken in the absence of irrigation facilities. In India only 20 per cent of the cultivated area is irrigated and the same is rising only at the rate of 3 lakh hectares a year. The high yielding varieties of seed, chemical fertilizers, etc., can be used only where there is assured supply of water. As only 20 per cent of the area receives irrigation, their application in the first instance will be confined to one-fifth of of the cultivated area. It is possible that soon the irrigated area may be saturated with fertilizers and high-yielding varieties of seed, and then the growth may be further slowed down unless we do something to increase the irrigated area at a much more rapid pace.

One aspect of the problem of ill-feeding is the inordinate rise in the prices of foodgrains over the last few years. Even in the year 1967-68 when the foodgrains production increased by 28 per cent over the previous year, their prices did not go down. This shows that trading elements have a strong grip over the market. As it is not possible to raise the purchasing power of the poorer sections of the population in the near future, it will be better if foodgrains is provided to this section at subsidised rates through fair price shops. The prices at the fair price shops should be considerably low so that person with the lowest incomes may also afford a square meal even with their meagre income. Strict measures will have to be taken to check subsidised grain from passing into black market for if the open market prices are considerably higher, the tendency to pass on the subsidised grain to the open market will be great, given the corrupt set-up of the present-day acquisitive society.

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Radicalism in Africa

K. M. P.

WHAT has gone wrong with radicalism in Africa? The once bright hope of a dawn in Africa has been dimmed; the Congo, where a genuinely nationalist and revolutionary movement was on the verge of success, is now under the jackboot of a military dictator. In Burundi the revolutionary flame fluttered and failed; in Camerouns, where the Cameroon People's Union had waged a violent and heroic struggle in the Bamileke and Sanaga maritime region for over a decade, there is now only an occasional ambush; in Madagascar the great nationalist revolt is now only a dim memory; in Kenya the leaders of the Mau Mau are happy to follow the advice of their British advisers; in the Ivory Coast Houphouët Boigny, after working in close alliance with the Communists in the late forties, had decided to turn his country into a model capitalist country. And even in countries like Ghana, Congo (Brazzaville), Mali, Algeria and Guinea, where generally radical governments came into power, a series of coups have taken place, raising doubts about the methods adopted and the policies pursued by these countries. An examination of the weaknesses of radicalism in Africa will perhaps help us to have a better understanding of the prospects of the Left in these countries.

A majority of African countries did not attempt to interfere with the social and administrative system they had inherited from the colonial masters. The three notable exceptions are Mali, Congo (Brazzaville) and Guinea, where a genuine attempt was made to change the social structure. In

Brazzaville the overthrow of Youlu was mainly due to the workers and students. The workers and trade unions have been prominent in the political upheavals in Dahomey and Upper Volta, and they are influential in the politics of countries like Senegal and Ivory Coast. The trade unions in Africa are not in the same category as in the developed countries or even in the developing countries where industrialisation has made some progress. In a majority of African countries the working class does not exist because they have primarily subsistence economies; the dominant trade unions are those of the white-collar workers—the teachers and civil servants. It is these unions that have come into conflict with the State; it is they whose salaries and perquisites made them a privileged class prepared to defend their own rights. In most African States the civil servants, including teachers, constitute the new bourgeoisie, and these unions are there to defend the rights of this class. A conflict between the unions and the State therefore does not lead to a change in the social structure even when the unions triumph with the help of the army, and merely leads to the replacement of one group by another.

It is true that in some of the African countries, notably Algeria, Ghana and to a certain extent Nigeria, Guinea and Senegal, there is an industrial working class. The industrial working class has come into conflict with the State in most of the countries; in Algeria the trade union has been emasculated, in Ghana and Guinea it is part of the State and party apparatus and is more like a depart-

ment of the State. Under Nkrumah there was persistent industrial unrest in Ghana, and this was primarily due to the fact that the workers felt they had no stake in the country. When the coup took place they were in a state of indifference; the workers felt that a change in the regime would not make any material difference to them. This was due to the fact that the so-called radical States pursued a policy not of socialism or even State capitalism but of bureaucratic capitalism. The golden cot and palatial buildings and the Mercedes were not peculiar to Ghana; in every African country professing radicalism, there have been similar complaints of people in authority accumulating wealth, getting into private business through intermediaries and behaving like a new ruling class. The vocabulary of socialism was there, but it was mixed with capitalist practices. The nationalisation which they put forward to support their claims of being socialist was deceptive; since these countries did not have a national bourgeoisie, the nationalisation was directed at foreign capital and it merely increased the power and the capacity for patronage of the bureaucrats. It was indeed an effective measure by a ruling class to perpetuate its rule.

Moreover, the political parties in these countries were weak in organisation. They had all the paraphernalia of a single party, a women's wing, a youth wing, political bureau, central committee, regional, district and village level organizations. Yet the parties, whether it was the FLN in Algeria, the CPP in Ghana, or the Sudanese Union in Mali, were

totally impotent and failed to prevent take over by the military. Despite talk of unity, these parties were deeply divided into factional groups, some of whom were willing to work with the army. This was particularly true of Mali and Congo (Brazzaville) where, because of Chinese influence, a strong Left-wing faction had developed which wanted to carry out the "true" revolution. In Brazzaville the rift affected not only the party but even the armed forces, and the result was that for the last two years there was a prolonged and bitter struggle in which sometimes the Left and sometimes the Right faction in the party emerged on top. The final result was a military take over.

In Mali a similar situation developed during the last two years, but there was a vital difference. In Brazzaville, the coup was in the interest of a factional group; in Mali it was against the socialist tendency itself. In both States the factional struggle had become bitter after the growth of Chinese influence. This introduced a new element into the politics of the radical States, for till now they had merely to guard against counter-revolutionary groups. In Mali pressure from the Left had led to a purge of the rightists, and the centrists in the party were under attack. The Left pretended that the Sudanese Union is not a proletarian party and as such is incapable of leading the Malian people towards socialism. Modibo Keita, they argued is not a proletarian and thus can-

not be the leader of the Malian people in the construction of a socialist society. They forgot that Mali is a backward country with no working class worth the name. The party, the centrists said, is forced by the objective conditions prevailing in the country to form a national front. Keita, though not a labourer, they pointed out, is a teacher and it is not the social origin but the attitude of the leader that is important. And Keita has been in the forefront of the struggle not only against colonialism but for creating a socialist society. The centrists concluded that Mali does not live in isolation; it is part of a world divided into two camps—the oppressors and the oppressed, the exploiters and the exploited, the possessing class and the disinherited. In the context of the present world, proletariat in a country like Mali does not mean a particular fraction of the working class but the entire toiling masses engaged in the fight against capitalism and imperialism. The Left inspired by Mao was not prepared to accept this position: they wanted a revolution here and now. The students and intellectuals, without any contact with reality, wanted the government to take an extreme Left-wing position. The economic difficulties, the devaluation and the austerity programme undertaken in order to enter the franc zone had encouraged the Right-wing elements which were laid low in 1964. They raised their heads again. The authority of Modibo Keita was challenged; the Right had been

purged and the Left was attacking the centrists. It was feared that the Left would triumph, and the former Rightist faction was willing to make common cause with the opponents of the regime. Lt. Mousa Traore's seizure of power was the direct result of increasing pressure from the Left faction.

The Brazzaville and Bamako coups are instructive, for the pattern may be repeated in Guinea and Mauritania. These countries face a similar situation, and the growing influence of Chinese ideology may lead to a coup by some unknown officers. For in Mali the senior officers are all loyal supporters of the regime; the army was politicalised but that did not prevent a coup. These coups also show that there is no particular pattern for military take-over in Africa and they cannot all be bundled into the same category. The coups in Dahomey, Upper Volta and even Ghana were mainly the result of popular discontent with a ruling group; ideology did not come into it. The Left in these countries, including Ghana, was not an effective force. In Brazzaville and Bamako it was not the weakness of the Left, but internal divisions that led to the overthrow, and unless the radical African leadership maintain a united front, they will fall a victim to reactionary forces. The blame for the Mali coup rests squarely on the Left faction in the Sudanese Union which deliberately weakened the party and opened the way for a military take-over.

INDO-SOVIET CO-OPERATION : NEW PHASE (Continued from page 12)

and atmosphere for the negotiation. The solution will have to be in terms of the commercial and economic needs of both sides and will emerge from a proper assessment of the needs and capacities of both economies to find growing areas of complementarity which at present appear somewhat blurred since one or both sides have tended to view the problem in terms of the first stage of the

development of Indo-Soviet economic cooperation and trade.

Thus enduring long-term solution of the problems lies basically in the possible potential of further diversification of the scope of economic cooperation between India and the Soviet Union rather than merely in trade pattern, specially because trade with the Soviet Union is bilateral and balanced and is not multilateral

and within the scheme of global exchange and a global balance. The visit of the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission to Moscow in September-October and the present visit of the Soviet delegation therefore need to be more closely and carefully examined and assessed in this context.

—B.M.
(To be continued)

Govt. Employees and the Strike Weapon

O. P. GUPTA

THE Central Government employees' token strike on September 19 has brought to the fore a number of issues. The main question which has come to the forefront is whether Government servants should have the right to go on strike or not.

Shri Chavan says that "no Government can tolerate indiscipline" and is therefore determined virtually to ban all strikes in the civil services,

Government employees' right to strike is a much debated issue and the controversy is not confined to this country. In fact, in most countries Government employees have gone on strike in violation of law rather than in conformity with it.

In earlier days, the need for such strikes never arose because Government services meant prestige and economic advantage. But as the State expanded its field of activities and undertook services like Railways, P and T, etc run on a commercial basis, the workers could not be prevented from agitating like workers in the private sector for their economic advance. The 2nd CPC in its report observed: "The community's pressure to keep down taxes and the desire for economy in governmental expenditure may sometimes have the same effect as considerations of profit among private employers. Though divergently inspired, the ultimate result in both cases may be identical; resistance to reasonable demands for increased remuneration or for improvement in conditions of service."

The Government has disfavoured the right to strike for civil servants. But in the post-war period, partially in recognition of the role played by civil servants

in the resistance against the Nazis—as in France, Italy, etc—this right has been recognised. Even otherwise, the growth of the TU movement in the post-war period all over the world has brought many privileges. In France today the right to strike can be restricted only by Parliament. Similar is the position in Italy, Austria, etc. In Malaya, the right to strike is recognised. In the newly-liberated countries the law followed has generally reflected European law, Ghana has provision for compulsory arbitration.

But in other major countries the position is somewhat different. In Britain, where the Labour Party has been in power for more than once, Government servants were able to secure the elimination of restrictions. Staff relations are governed by the whitley system *i.e.* the right to strike is circumvented through compulsory arbitration. In Canada, there is no law to recognise trade unions, but no special restrictions have been placed on Telegraph and Telephones. The USA, while postal employees' right to strike is blocked through the oath of allegiance, the employees in telephones, which are mostly privately owned, have the right to strike.

Labour Law in India.

In India the Fundamental right (Article 19) are applicable to Government employees. Law Minister Govinda Menon told the Lok Sabha: "Even a very liberal interpretation of sub-clause (c) of clause (1) of Article 19 cannot lead to the conclusion that the trade unions have a guaranteed

right—*i.e.*, a fundamental right—to effective collective bargaining or otherwise. The right to strike or right to declare a lock-out may be controlled or restricted by appropriate industrial legislation, not by the Constitution, and the validity of such legislation would have been tested not with reference to the criteria laid down in Article 19 but by totally different considerations."

Even otherwise reasonable restrictions could be placed on the exercise of Fundamental Rights.

Labour Law

After independence, partly because of the close association of the national leaders with the trade unions in Railways and P and T and partly because of the effect of the 1946 postmen's strike, the labour laws could not discriminate between workers in private employment and Government services. The Industrial Disputes Act was enacted to eliminate the possibility of strike in Essential Services including Railways, P and T, etc. The philosophy behind the Act was that if arbitration is provided strikes are unjustified. Militant workers generally disfavour compulsory arbitration not only because of the delays involved but also because legal quibbling became dominant. However, P and T and some other workers welcomed it because, by laying the procedure for strike, the Government indirectly recognised the right to strike.

Today 21 years after independence, the Government wants to arm itself with greater powers not because the Industrial

Disputes Act has failed but because the employers, including even the Government, refuse to submit to arbitration. In fact, very few strikes have taken place during these years after disputes were referred to arbitration. In the civil services, the Government has never applied the Act. Even in 1957, while Government did not consider the strike notice sufficiently serious to justify reference to arbitration, it promulgated an Ordinance to ban the strike.

Again in 1960, the Government did not find any justification to refer dispute to arbitration on the plea that it has already been enquired into by a Pay Commission. In the newspaper dispute, the Government did not apply the same yardstick. Yet it found justification to promulgate an Ordinance against Government employees in 1968 the same story was repeated.

In India, this specific question has been enquired into by two Pay Commissions. The first CPC in 1946 observed: "We have been asked by officials to recommend that strikes by public servants should be declared illegal.... We share the view that the provision of ample opportunities for expression of opinion and ventilation of grievances by constitutional methods and on democratic lines is far more likely to avoid violent conflicts than are the method of State absolutism."

A serious crisis grew in 1957. The strike was however averted only a few hours before zero hour. Jawaharlal Nehru drawing lessons from the events wrote: "Strike has been on old and well-recognised weapon of industrial labour to better conditions. But I would earnestly suggest that the time has come when other methods should be evolved for the benefit of labour as of the community at large.... If we are to avoid strikes, lockouts and the like, we must have effective methods of solving disputes equitably as they arise."

Things were however allowed to stagnate. The 2nd CPC which was asked to give its opinion observed: "If a proposal that Government servants should give up the strike weapon is to have

a just basis, and is to secure reasoned acceptance by them, there should be set up an adequate machinery for negotiation, redress of grievances and settlement of disputes; and there should, further, be provision for arbitration to which recourse can be had, should a difference on a question of remuneration or some other particularly important conditions of service, such as leave and hours of work, remain unresolved. It is only thus the Government would be discharging the obligation towards their employees which they would be assuming by requiring them to give up the right to withhold their labour. If it is in the public interest that Government servants should not use a weapon which, in the hands of other employees, is an effective instrument for securing fair remuneration and satisfactory conditions of employment, it is only just and right that the Government servants should have an alternative arrangement for securing equitable treatment. If strikes and demonstrations can be eliminated from the public service and fair treatment can be ensured to public servants through orderly processes, introduction of an adequate machinery for removal of grievances, including compulsory arbitration, would not be an unreasonable price to pay.

"We are not suggesting amendment of the law. What we have in view is that a change should be brought about by the employees themselves adjuring the use of the strike weapon and demonstrations, and the Government accepting a convention that they would refer to arbitration any dispute concerning important matters, such as pay and allowances, leave entitlement and hours of work, which are not settled by negotiation. We think that such an arrangement will be possible within the framework of the present law. What is needed is a fundamentally new approach, to which the existing law constitutes no obstacle, and for the promotion of which no new legislation appears necessary".

Sri Nanda, the then Labour Minister, told the Lok Sabha in

1960: "We are not going to ban strikes; we are going to make them superfluous... Even now we can ban strikes. There is the Industrial Disputes Act which, when we refer a case for adjudication, a strike becomes illegal. So illegality is not a new concept... The stress is not on banning strike; the stress is on the machinery to be provided so that disputes will be resolved by mutual understanding. Occasionally, if something remained, that would be settled by arbitration or adjudication or some process. This is superior to anything that we have got in our existing legislation."

Only when he became Home Minister he could act on these lines, and the JCM was created, where instead of making abjuring of strikes a pre-condition, the objective was sought to be realised through a "Declaration of Joint Intent" as in Britain.

Sri Jagjivan Ram, who was then Labour Minister, came out strongly in defence of the right to strike.

It is in this background that Deputy Speaker Khadilkar raised the following issue: "While interpreting the Constitution we cannot brush aside its social implications as well as assurances given to the working people through legislations like the Industrial Disputes Act. Here we have a Bill which seeks to ban strikes. Can you legislate to take away the right to strike without providing an alternative remedy? This is the crux of the issue".

The Government may, with the majority it commands, get the Bill through. It may justify it as a necessary evil and thus hide the real purpose which is to deprive the workers of rights they have earned over many decades. But this will not solve the problem.

In the Statement of Objects of the Bill the government says that "in the prevailing circumstances, government consider that they should continue to have powers to meet any situation which may be created by attempts similar to those made on the eve of September 19 and to ensure the maintenance of essential services and the normal life of the community".

As the JCA has on more than one occasion declared that a General Strike is not on its agenda, the real purpose is different.

1. The Government having taken a strongman attitude wants to push through the prosecutions. Eight thousand workers under trial now will face the consequences.

2. The aim is to acquire power at a time when the trade union movement of government employees is exhausted and the movement outside is unable to put in the required resistance.

3. The aim is to humiliate the opposition leaders by exposing their incapacity to protect employees.

4. Incidentally the aim is also to prepare to ban strikes in the private sector as well, as visualised by sub-para 2 (1) (a) (ix) which says: "... any other service connected with matters with respect to which Parliament has power to make laws and which the Central Government being of opinion that strikes therein would prejudicially affect the maintenance of any public utility service, the public safety or the

maintenance of supplies and services necessary for the life of community, may, by notification in the Official Gazette, declare to be an essential service for the purposes of this Act".

It is made clear that the Industrial Disputes Act cannot protect workers who are brought under the preview of the new measure.

There is clearly a fear in Governments' mind, that a much more intense trouble is likely after the report of the National Commission on Labour becomes available. It is an expression of their understanding that the Joint Consultative Machinery, with provision for arbitration of disputes in the matter of pay and allowances, working hours and leave, will not meet situations because Sri Morarji Desai and the ICS bureaucrats refuse to subject themselves to arbitrators. Moreover, these fears arise from the fact that continuance of present economic policies is bound to cause eruption of labour unrest on a big scale.

The Government should be asked to delink past events from the measure and let the issue as

such be referred to the ILC or to a Select Committee of Parliament. The Government must be made to realise that retrospective implementation of the Bill will not help to realise the objective of "eliminating militants" because the arrests are not spread over the country. Out of 8000 arrests 7000 are in 4 States, and 90% of the officials have been arrested from three dozen offices. Insistence on prosecutions will result mainly in the imposition of suffering in four States and on innocent people.

Moreover, the Bill is only an enabling measure. The Government employees' right to give strike notice remains and the Bill only empowers the Government to take action by a specific order. One does not know when the Government will or will not act. Once notices are given, the tempo will rise and the Government will declare strike illegal. Thus it will be used to eliminate active workers rather than to stop strikes.

In spite of the weaknesses in the movement, if the TU leaders unite to take steps, the situation can be saved even now.

DISCUSSION

Czechoslovakia

With this week's contribution ends the four-month old discussion on Czechoslovakia in MAINSTREAM. Next week MAINSTREAM will carry some communications which have been received in connection with this discussion.

Background and Consequences

KAMBHAMPATI SATYANARAYANA

MORE than a decade has elapsed since the Communist Party of the Soviet Union began the struggle against "personality cult," resulting in more and more initiative among the party ranks and people. Their example was followed by other parties of the East European countries, which succeeded in varying degrees in

checking the deformities of socialist democracy. The Czechoslovak party also adopted several resolutions which were intended to overcome the bureaucratic-centralist methods of leadership. But, they were met with lack of understanding, dogmatism and, in some cases, direct suppression. Socialist democracy was not

expanded, rank and file initiative was discouraged, and methods of revolutionary dictatorship deteriorated into bureaucracy. These features became an impediment to progress in all spheres of life, leading to general stagnation, and, in certain cases, even to the reduction of the living standard of the people. The fact that out of the

40,000 victims of "personality cult" only 700 were rehabilitated shows how callous the leadership and how patient the people of Czechoslovakia were during these 12 years.

Twelve years are too long a time for a socialist country to tolerate such a state of affairs, especially after a bitter struggle against "personality cult" was yielding varying results in the neighbouring countries. Yet, neither the Soviet Union nor the other members of the socialist community seem to have rendered fraternal help to Czechoslovakia, although a long tradition of mutual consultations among Communist Parties exist.

Meanwhile, Czechoslovakia, the first industrial country to achieve socialism, with strong traditions of bourgeois democracy and national liberation struggle, adopted its own course to liquidate the distortions of socialist democracy. Following the decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in January 1968, Novotny was removed from the supreme leadership of the Party and the State. But this was only the first step. Actions were taken both above and below against those who were responsible for impeding the progress of socialist democracy.

The first step taken by the Central Committee was followed by an outburst of mass enthusiasm. It was not as if the Central Committee decided to reshuffle the leading cadres from top to bottom and everybody else just carried out its orders: the leading personnel were changed in every government department, party committee, trade union and other social organisations, after prolonged and stubborn discussion.

This is an unprecedented phenomenon not heard of anywhere in the Communist World. Students and youth, writers and artists, scientists and economists, workers and peasants gave expression to their suppressed feelings of anger. They demanded a basic change in the political, economic, and cultural set-up. Fortunately, some members of the Central Committee responded to the democratic urge of the masses.

They came forward and began to address public meetings; welcoming and supporting the basic demands of the people.

Joseph Spaack, of the Central Committee, declared: "The development of socialist democracy will to a large extent depend not on what the higher bodies do but on whether the ordinary citizens will take hold of the process".

One can easily notice from the above that the leadership in Czechoslovakia, unlike that in the Soviet Union, avoided the mistake of throwing all blame on a single culprit. Secondly, its struggle against "Personality Cult" was inseparably linked with the direct and active participation of the masses. Both these are new to the world Communist movement.

Meanwhile, certain distortions have occurred in the rectification campaign itself. For instance, Alexander Kliment put forward the writers' political platform thus: "Free elections, a functioning parliament with an *opposition*, *active neutrality*, a federal state, and socialism of our type, according to our needs, according to our possibilities and according to our choice". The Czechoslovak Union of Youth declared that it could no longer identify itself mechanically with the policy of the party.

The most glaring example of such distorted interpretations is the "Two Thousand Words" appeal, signed by the thousands of people belonging to all sections of society. While admitting that the Communist Party was "honestly striving" to save the nation's honour, it appealed to the people to elect their "own" candidates, bypassing the Communist Party—even opposing it.

Such ideas as the above are a challenge to the Communist Party. As such, the leadership openly criticised them. Even before such ideas were expressed, the Novotny faction damned the new upsurge in the country as an imperialist-inspired attempt to stage a "counter-revolution of the Hungarian type." But, Novotny's protege, Gen. Sejna, who was the Secretary of the Party Committee in the Defence Ministry, made matters easy. He tried to use

force in the proceedings of the Central Committee by attempting to arrest some of the progressives, and thus to reduce the anti-Novotny forces into a minority. But, having failed in this attempt, he escaped to USA. In doing so he destroyed the chances of the conservatives staging a come-back. His escape made it impossible for them to pose as real revolutionaries fighting to save Czechoslovakia.

As the rectification campaign intensified, and as the Action Programme was approved by the Plenary session of the Central Committee in the month of April, giving freedom of speech and writing to all, anti-Party and anti-Soviet statements began to increase. They contained open calls for an opposition party, revision of the Warsaw Pact, neutral policy on international issues etc. This phenomenon worried both the Czechoslovak leadership and those of the Soviet and other Socialist countries. On the one hand, changes in the leadership of the Party were still incomplete; though Novotny and his clique are no longer in the Presidium, they still command 40 percent of votes in the Central Committee. The centrists, who support the progressives, occupy the key position in the leadership. Therefore, the danger of reversal is still there. On the other hand, the leadership is committed to full freedom for the people but which is being misused by certain anti-Party elements parading as democrats and patriots. Under these circumstances, the new leadership adopted the democratic method of persuasion and criticism, but not coercion and suppression. The fact that 68 Party members belonging to the Novotny clique voted against Smrkovsky when he was elected President of the National Assembly, shows the strength of the conservatives in the Parliament as well as the truly democratic character of the Campaign. So, the Party leadership had to proceed cautiously. Dubcek the Party Secretary issued a statement on April 12 warning against anarchic trends: "Signs of lack of discipline, which exist, show that many understand democracy one-sidedly, and there-

fore, do not understand it to the full. To understand democracy as a situation in which everyone interferes in everything and does what he wants, is anarchy, which has nothing in common with real democracy". In an interview to *L'Humanite* on April 11 he said that the Party would seek to strengthen its ties with the Soviet Union. Addressing the members of the Bratislava Committee of Communist Party on April 20 he said: "There is no question of permitting the establishment of an opposition party." He also warned against those who wanted to develop the socialist system through the old coercive methods and dogmatic administrative measures. He expressed the Party's determination to fight on both the fronts. On April 24, Cernik, the Premier, told the Parliament that the Government would devote itself to "the demanding tasks of internal policy" in a period of "increased international tension caused by the aggressive policy of the imperialists." "We would also", he added, "fulfill the tasks stemming from the Warsaw Treaty".

So, the new leadership of Czechoslovakia, while striking to its policy of strengthening socialist democracy with the direct participation of the masses, did not feel helpless in the face of anti-socialist elements. Nor was it averse to discharging its obligations to the Warsaw Pact for defending socialism against imperialist aggressors. Its supreme strength is the popular upsurge for democracy which is also unswervingly socialist.

But, the Soviet leadership reacted in the opposite direction. On April 15, *Pravda*, organ of the Soviet Communist Party, published an article without mentioning Czechoslovakia, which asserted that there was no such thing as absolute freedom or pure democracy. Socialist democracy must inevitably be class-biased and society guided by the Communist Party. There could not be freedom in a socialist society which encroached on achievements and rights of the working people. There could not be room for anti-socialist activities in countries of socialism.

Pravda characterised this trend as "Right revisionism", as distinguished from the "left" variety which is associated with China. Both the forms were attributed to national egoism.

So, the Soviet stand is clear. The freedom enjoyed by the anti-socialist forces in Czechoslovakia was encroaching, according to the Soviet leadership, on the achievements and rights of the working people; the Czechoslovak leaders ought to have curbed this freedom. In other words, censorship should have been imposed on the mass media of communication.

This question came up for discussion before the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in the month of May.

The Resolution adopted by the Committee said that the anti-socialist forces were numerically weak. They could become a threat only if they were able to misuse the people's dis-satisfaction for their ends and to create conflict and chaos in the country. The resolution opposed in principle the creation of an opposition party standing outside the National Front.

The Central Committee issued a proclamation to all Party members and the people of Czechoslovakia, explaining its stand and appealing for full-fledged co-operation. It forthrightly declared that "there is no place in our political life for opposition parties". It expressed the conviction that the independence, sovereignty and security of Czechoslovakia "depend on the firmness of our ties with friendly socialist countries, primarily with the Soviet Union". It also warned against the "discredited political forces of the past, which think their opportunity has again come", which were "trying to misuse the democratisation and to return to the political scene."

The above formulations show that the Czechoslovak leadership, in the conditions existing then, preferred the method of criticism and exposure to that of suppression. We can appreciate their standpoint when we remember that the new leadership as well as the vast masses of Czechoslovakia

consider the centralist-bureaucratic clique as the main enemy, against whom the fight was still incomplete, whereas the anti-socialist Right reaction was relatively weak, which can be dealt with by means of criticism and exposure. Perhaps, the Czech leadership thought that if methods of coercion were adopted the freedom of expression curbed, the vast sections of democratic masses and the relatively weak reactionary forces would get mixed up, the latter being in a position to rally the genuine democratic masses behind them, as happened in Hungary in 1956.

We have no sufficient material before us to know how effectively the reactionary propaganda was being criticised and exposed before the masses. Under such circumstances, one finds it difficult to place implicit confidence in the too optimistic assessment of the Czechoslovak leaders. As far as the most glaring cases of reactionary propaganda are concerned, for instance, the "two thousand words" appeal, we know that the leadership as well as some sections of the ranks promptly came forward to criticise and condemn them. But what about the other statements and appeals? Were similar articles and appeals effectively criticised? If so, the Czechoslovak leaders can be considered to be sufficiently vigilant against counter-revolutionaries and their machinations. If not, the anxiety of the Soviet as well as the other fraternal parties must be shared by us.

Coming to the question of mutual consultations, especially, after 1960, when the World Communist Parties unanimously agreed to adopt this course for arriving at common understanding, the Czechoslovak problem could have been discussed by the representatives of all the Socialist countries of Eastern Europe, instead of allowing it to become more and more acute. They could have helped Czechoslovakia to work out a strategy for conducting the struggle against "Personality Cult" as well as the likely danger of Right reaction.

This was not done, at least to the knowledge of the other Parties. Failure in this respect,

naturally, left the Czechoslovaks to conduct a lone battle. At least, after February 1968, when 68 deputies of the National Assembly openly flouted the Party decision and voted against the official candidate in the Presidential election, such a measure could have been adopted as by that time many of the fraternal Parties of Eastern Europe also had become apprehensive about the Czechoslovak developments.

Still another opportunity presented itself after the March-April Plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party which adopted the Action programme of the Party, which contained some points which, according to *Pravda*, began to be used by the Rightwingers as a "legal platform" for further attacks on the Communist Party, on the foundations of socialism and on Soviet-Czechoslovak friendship. The Soviet leadership, instead of adopting the course of mutual consultations among all the East European parties, came out first with polemical attacks against the Czech leadership, followed by political and even organisational offensives. Even after Moscow meeting of May 4 between the Czechoslovak and Soviet leaders which proved to be ineffective, the only correct method of mutual consultations was not adopted.

Meanwhile the, Czechoslovak situation became worse and worse. An East German newspaper *Berliner Zeitung* published a ridiculous report about the presence of American tanks and West German troops in Prague." Under such circumstances, the Czechoslovaks had to defend themselves. The imperialist press played up these mutual recriminations to the full.

It was in such an atmosphere of mutual mistrust and vilification that Premier Kosygin and the Soviet military delegation visited Czechoslovakia in the month of May, and had consultations with the Czechoslovak leaders. This was on the eve of the joint military manoeuvres. But, the atmosphere was already so full of suspicion that the best efforts

of the Czechoslovak leaders to inspire confidence among their people about the mutual friendship and solidarity between the two partners failed to inspire enthusiasm. Instead of adopting the method of pressurising the Czechoslovak leaders during negotiations, and attacking them in the press openly, the Soviet leadership, which has had a glorious record of fraternal aid to other parties, could have convened a consultative meeting of all the European Parties to discuss the problem of Czechoslovakia. Most of the Communist Parties of Western Europe did not by that time express themselves on the Czechoslovak question.

Meanwhile, the joint military manoeuvres that took place, according to the previous schedule, in the month of June renewed confidence among the Czechoslovak people. But, the continuous postponement of the dates of withdrawal created suspicion. For the first time it gave rise to apprehensions among the fraternal Parties of Western Europe also. They began to issue statements demanding the immediate withdrawal of the Soviet troops. The area of conflict, thus, extended beyond the East European Socialist countries. The last chance for a consultative meeting between representatives of European Parties was thus shattered. The gradual withdrawal of Soviet forces from Czechoslovakia, followed by Moscow's acceptance to hold a bilateral meeting of the two Party leaderships on Czechoslovak soil allayed to some extent the atmosphere of tension.

The joint letter of the leaders of the Soviet Union, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary and GDR to the Czechoslovak leadership on July 14 and the letter's reply to it on July 19 give a clear picture of the differences between the two sides. The Czechoslovaks admitted that the reactionary forces were trying to misuse the freedom of press, radio and television. But, they differed from the five Parties on two points: (1) assessment of the strength of the anti-socialist forces; and (2) the best way of defeating them.

The five Parties believed that the anti-socialist forces had become so powerful as to constitute an immediate danger to socialist democracy, that a counter-revolutionary situation had arisen in Czechoslovakia, and that the alliance of Czechoslovakia with the other Socialist countries was seriously threatened. The leading role of the Communist Party should be asserted and the situation saved by resorting to coercive measures like placing a ban on all suspicious organisations and groups, imposing strict censorship on the press, radio and television and launching a campaign against Right reaction which constituted the main enemy. The Czechoslovak leaders rejected this assessment as exaggerated. They believed that the anti-socialist forces were not so strong as to constitute an immediate threat to socialism, and that a counter-revolutionary situation had not arisen in Czechoslovakia; the best way to defeat such elements was not to resort to coercive methods prevalent under Novotny but to win the voluntary and active support of the people by strengthening socialist democracy, and thus isolate the anti-socialists. Thus, it was essentially a political struggle, which had to be waged by political means. They were confident that they could win it provided they got the opportunity and time to implement the reforms they had announced. Any reversal of these reforms and return to the discredited methods of the old bureaucratic regime would, they were afraid, invoke the resistance of the masses and drive honest patriotic elements into the arms of the anti-socialist forces.

Thus the gulf between the two viewpoints is very wide. The issues involved are of vital importance not only to the Socialist countries but to the revolutionary movement of the working-class throughout the world. On the publication of these two letters, most of the Communist Parties of West Europe upheld the right of Czechoslovak Communists to pursue their own policy. According to them, any rupture or active intervention would result in further disrupting the already divided

ional Communist move-
But these warnings proved
no avail. The French Com-
munist Party decided to propose
a meeting of the Communist
Parties of Europe "in the very
near future." But theirs was a
belated decision.

The Bratislava agreement
signed by the leaders of the
Communist Party of Czechos-
lovakia and those of the Com-
munist and Workers' Parties of
the Soviet Union, Poland,
Hungary, Bulgaria, and G.D.R.
in the first week of August gave
hopes of settlement. Following
the agreement polemics between
Prague and her allies stopped
completely. The warm cheers
that greeted the Soviet leaders
when they appeared in public in
Bratislava were a spontaneous
expression of popular feelings.

But, hardly had a fortnight
elapsed when the Warsaw Pact
countries, led by the Soviet Union,
suddenly launch a massive armed
intervention, allegedly against the
threat of counter-revolution. All
the important towns and cities
were occupied by troops, ar-
moured cars and tanks. Dubcek,
the Party Secretary was accused
of leading a minority faction that
supported counter-revolution. He
and some of his associates were
bundled into an armoured car and
driven off to an unknown destina-
tion, and then to Moscow.
Pravda charged that under his
leadership "a real pogrom, a real
moral execution, of Party people
took place". With the armed
action, the former atmosphere of
trust consequent on the Bratislava
agreement disappeared; a wave
of indignation swept throughout

the country. All public activities
came to a stop. But for the dis-
creet and far-sighted stand taken
by the leadership and the un-
paralleled discipline shown by
the people much blood would
have been shed and a fertile
ground prepared for agents pro-
vocateurs.

Whatever strength the re-
actionaries had, increased ten-fold
after the intervention. Not that
they were so strong as to lead a
revolt in the face of the armed
might of the allied forces. The
position they came to occupy in
the political life of the country
became stronger after the inter-
vention. They could operate
underground radio transmitters
successfully, spreading their mis-
chievous propaganda under
high-sounding slogans of democ-
racy, freedom and sovereignty.
Facts are daily brought to light,
which go to show that counter-
revolutionary forces in Czechos-
lovakia grew so strong as to make
active preparations for an armed
revolt.

This was the direct conse-
quence of the events preceeding
as well as those following the
armed intervention, a consequence
which was the opposite of what
the authors had intended.

The Czechoslovak leaders are
today faced with two alter-
natives: either they should rap-
idly change over to measures of
suppression and coercion against
what they should consider as the
main enemy of Socialism, or
create conditions for the perma-
nent stay of foreign troops.

Secondly, many of the Com-
munist Parties of the world
having already criticised the action

of the Soviet Union and the other
four Socialist countries, the forth-
coming meeting of the World
Communist Parties will have to
face the danger of futher disunity
in the international Communist
movement, thus indirectly stren-
gthening the hands of im-
perialism.

Thirdly, in a period when the
Soviet Union and the other So-
cialist countries are more and
more gaining the confidence of
the vast masses of people in the
newly-liberated countries of Asia
and Africa, on account of their
unstinted economic aid, their
latest action in Czechoslovakia
breeds suspicion among many
people about the bonafides of that
help, while the Right reaction
tries to stabilise itself on its anti-
Communist platform.

Fourthly, repeated declara-
tions by the leaders of Communist
Parties in different countries about
the equality and independence of
each national unit of the world
Communist movement will be
doubted by many. Declarations
and decisions of world Communist
Parties will not hereafter com-
mand the same respect and
authority as before.

Finally, the atmosphere of
disunity and conflict in the world
Communist movement, which is
already divided, will spread
frustration among Party ranks and
supporters in each country.

Such are the harmful conse-
quence of the armed intervention
in Czechoslovakia. Such is the
fruit of the abandonment of the
time-honoured tradition of mutual
consultations and discussions for
arriving at agreed decisions.

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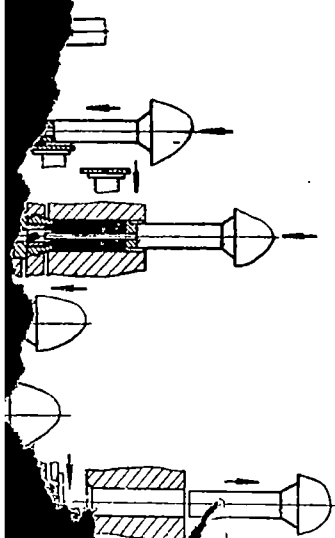
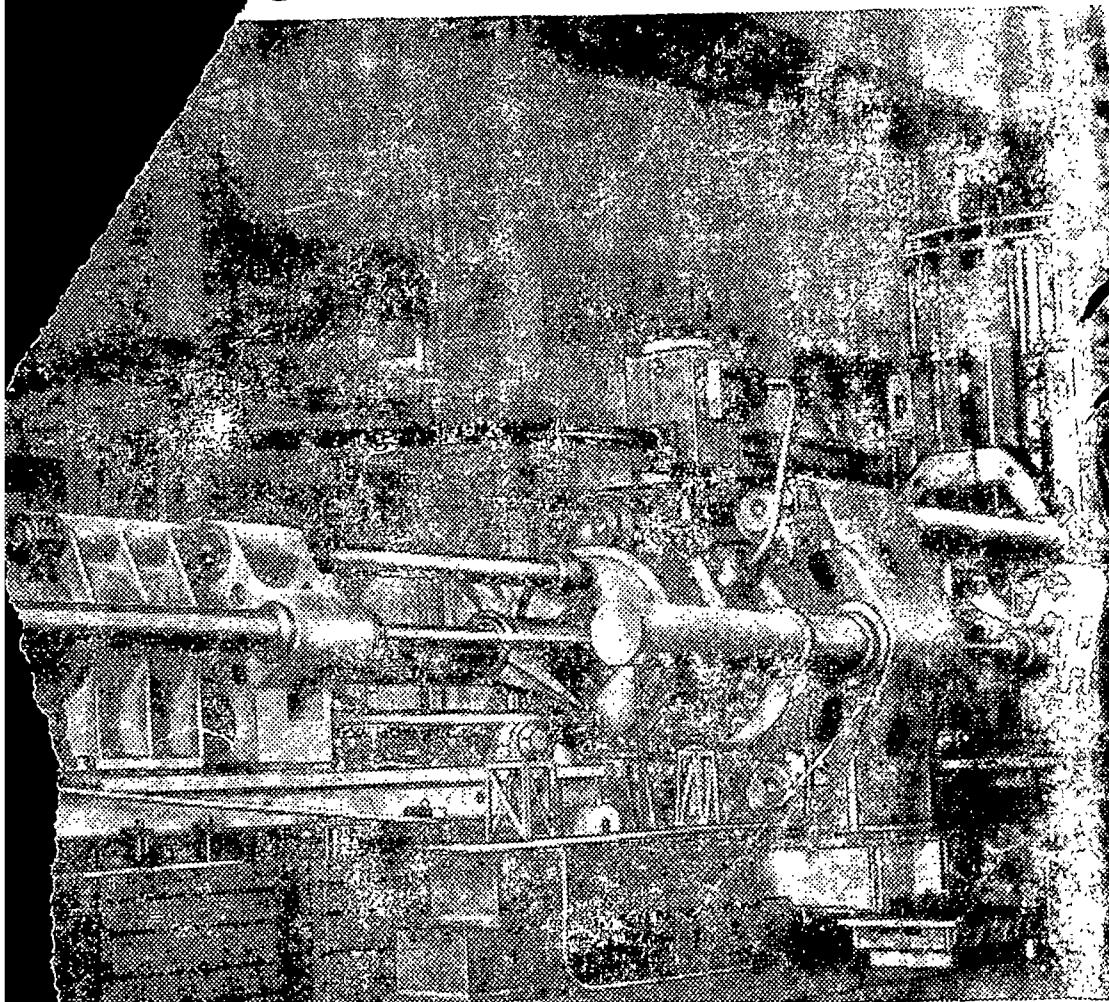
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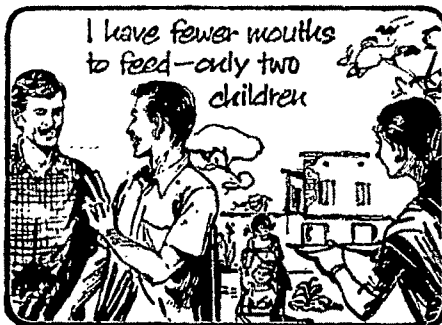
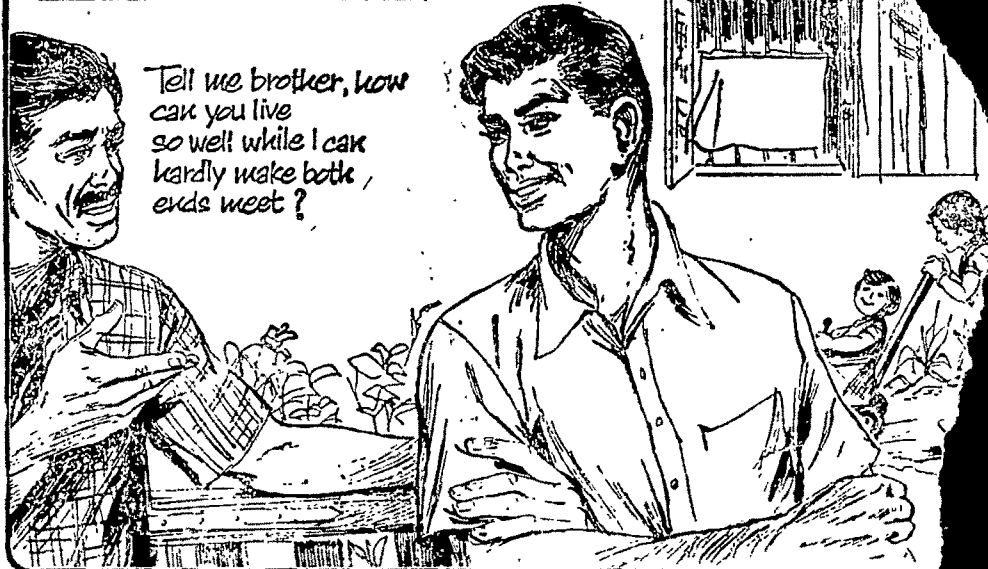
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